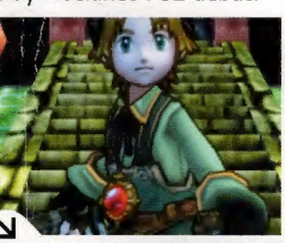
No.1 FOR PLAYSTATION 2

PSM2

NEW GAMES!

SOUL CALIBUR 2
FIGHT FEVER: See Namco's big hitter take on VF4 Evo!

DIE HARD: VENDETTA
HANS-ON! We're first to play McClane's PS2 debut!



DARK CHRONICLE
ROLE US A FAT ONE! Early verdict of Sony's huge RPG.

DEF JAM VENDETTA
DEF LEOTARD! Why this could KO Smackdown...

ENTER THE MATRIX

SEE IT NOW! We're the *ONLY* mag with Matrix action on DVD!

SPLINTER CELL

FIRST PS2 tips!
You *CAN'T AFFORD* to miss these!

LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS

Old front bumps faces the PSM2 judgement.
We deliver the first verdict –
and it's a shocker...

PLUS:
Aliens vs Predator
EA's Tony Hawk beater
Devil May Cry 2 Tips

PS3!
World's First Pics!
Honest!
No, *look*...
(...on pg62)

*DVD not available in the US or Canada

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Xtreme Legends™

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3™

The Warriors Return, and the Battle Rages On...

7 Untold Stories

Play as 7 fierce generals in Musou mode: Lu Bu, Diao Chan, Meng Huo, Zhu Rong, Zhang Jiao, Dong Zhuo and Yuan Shao. Completely revamped stages with new scenarios and events.

Customize Your Bodyguards

Assign playable characters, including Lu Bu, as your bodyguards. Use Double Musou Attacks in a one-player game. Select the gender, uniform, and weapon for each guard in your unit.

- Discover 5th Weapons and New Items!
- Four New Challenge Modes!
- New "Very Hard" Difficulty Level!
- Challenge Mode Ranking System!

DW3 REMIX!!! Play XTREME LEGENDS by itself or with Dynasty Warriors 3 to power up the original with new XL features. Memory Card data is fully compatible between both games.

AVAILABLE MARCH 2003

PlayStation®2

Create the characters. Enjoy the chaos.

PlayStation.2

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Then get out of the madhouse! Living with your nagging mum isn't easy. So it's time to spread your wings as a Sim on Playstation 2. You'll need to find a job and a new place to live, so why not make it a bachelor pad and find your soul-mate while you're at it? Arm yourself with the arsenal you'll need to succeed: a strip poker table, a nice stereo, and if you make it to level five, the all-powerful 'Love Tub'. Play head-to-head or go solo in the level based mission and unlock new items and other goodies. And look out for the Monkey Butler who'll pander to your every whim. Create and control your cast of characters in The Sims™ on Playstation 2. It's what your thumbs are for.

EA GAMES

Challenge Everything™

www.thesims.uk.ea.com

Sly Raccoon

HABITAT: THE SHADOWS
BEHAVIOUR: DEVIOUS. DARING. SLY.
IDENTIFICATION: NO CLEAR SIGHTINGS YET

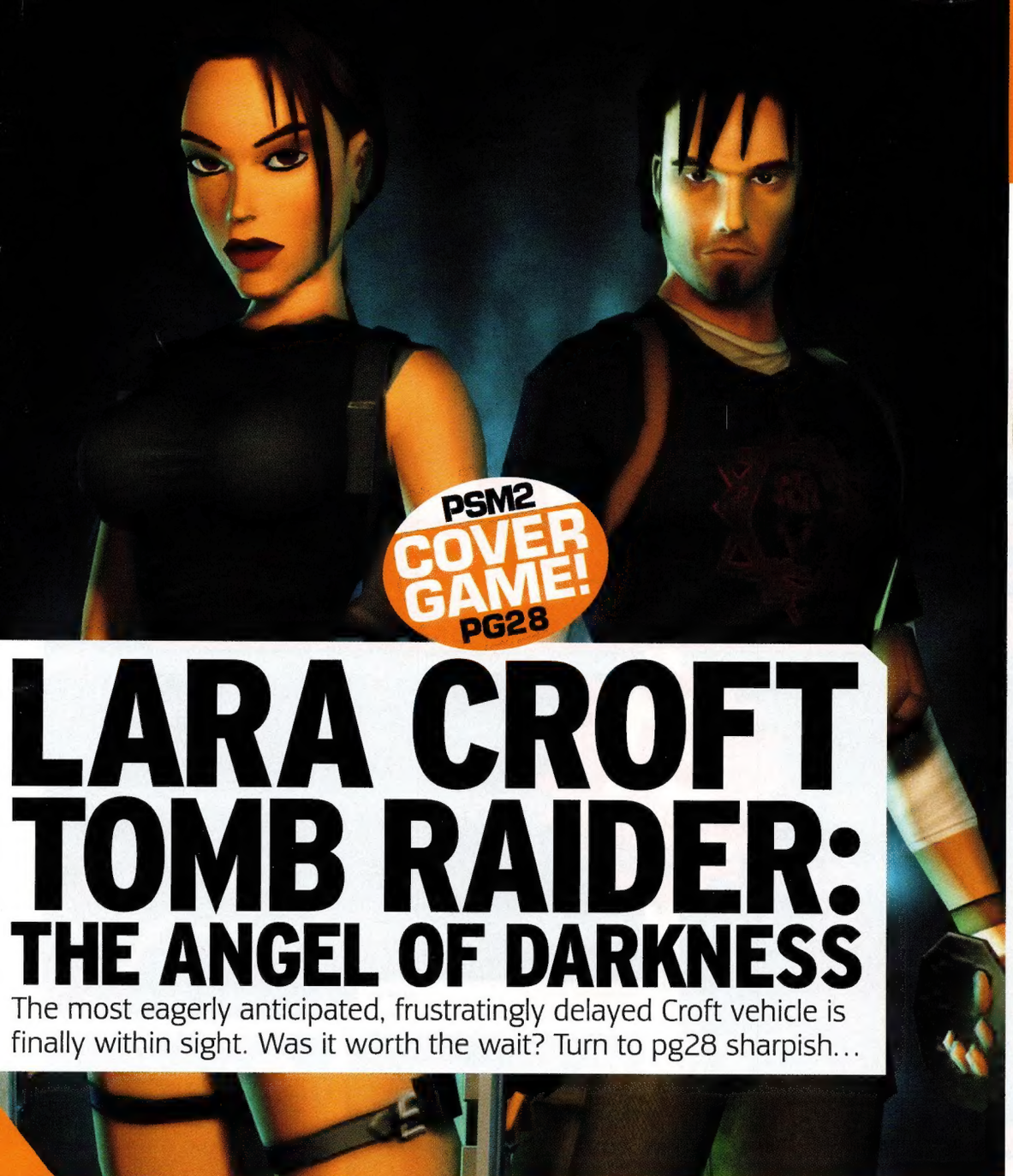
Sly Raccoon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. © 2002 Sony Computer Entertainment America, Inc. Developed by Sucker Punch Productions, LLC. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe

Sly Raccoon. Raised in the art of thieving. His mission. To reclaim his family's honour and their stolen book on the secrets of thievery. You'll use more mind than muscle to help him outsmart the law and outwit the bad guys. Bravery, deceit, cunning and stealth are his stock in trade. Once seen, never forgotten.

uk.playstation.com
www.slyschool.com

PlayStation 2
THE STEALTH PLACE THE DEVIOUS PLACE THE THIRD PLACE

WELCOME TO PSM2



PSM2 COVER GAME! PG28

LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS

The most eagerly anticipated, frustratingly delayed Croft vehicle is finally within sight. Was it worth the wait? Turn to pg28 sharpish...

OK, BAD NEWS, WE'RE AFRAID. JOEL HAS LEFT US TO WRITE BOOKS FOR BOYS.

It's, er, not how it sounds. But at least he spent his last few days doing the two things he enjoys most: fighting men in pants and posing fearfully with glamour models. Witness the disturbing evidence in our *Backyard Wrestling* exposé on pg19 – Eidos' bloody *WWE* beater. To be honest, while we'll miss Joel's take-no-prisoners approach to gift-waving PRs, scything insights and violent gesticulations, at least he won't be around to moan about duff games causing the issue to run late. Aw, bless...

Suitably forlorn, we sought solace with an old flame. Jonnie went to Derby where Core are putting the finishing touches to *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider The Angel of Darkness* after almost three years of delays. Will Ms Croft make her Easter release date? Will Jonnie stop banging on about the luscious environments and the Proto-Nephilim boss battle? Grab our verdict on pg28. No-one's been closer to Lara than PSM2 and no one else can tell you whether it'll be worth 40 hard-earned notes.

The good news continues, as E3 draws near – discover Sony's shock announcements on pg18 – promising a rash of original games. *Syphon Filter Online*? You know where to look. There's almost too much to talk about, what with our shock PS3 revelation and the first independent review of *Splinter Cell*. Oh, and globally exclusive footage of *Enter The Matrix*. Enjoy the issue and look forward to a bright, bright year for PS2 – just don't forget where you read and *watched* it all first.

THE PSM2 TEAM

BY CHOOSING BRITAIN'S BEST PS2 MAG, EVERY MONTH WE GUARANTEE YOU:

THE SHARPEST OPINIONS

Unlike other magazines, we're not 'in bed' with the industry – we can write what we want, when we want. We're the only mag to bring you hands-on verdicts of games while they're still being made and it's against PSM2's reviews that others are judged. Our readers always come first and we'll never betray your trust.

THE CLEAREST INFORMATION

Don't put up with magazines that give you 400 words of indulgent drivel before they actually start talking about a game. PSM2 gets straight to the point while the others are still up their own arses. No-one comes close to the quality of our writing and we guarantee you the best, most exclusive screenshots every single issue.

THE RICHEST DETAIL

We play games longer and harder than anyone else and stuff every page with the detail we find. We want to show you what it's like to feel the rain on the screen in *Metal Gear Solid 2* and floor an Audi TT around central London in *The Getaway*. The result? By reading PSM2, you're the most informed people on the planet.

THE BIGGEST GAMES

As well as bringing you unrivalled coverage of every new UK game, we review the biggest titles as soon as they hit Japan and America – so you know which ones are worth waiting for. If a game's not in PSM2, it's not worth knowing about. Anyone who decides to sneak a game on to the shelves behind our backs can't be trusted.

THE HOTTEST DVD ACTION

Forget a disc full of developer-approved CG and misinformed, patronising press release voiceovers – we carry more in-game footage than any other mag. In fact, we show you more games in action, full stop (don't let inferior mags try and tell you otherwise). No-one can better the kind of inside info we get. You won't miss a thing. And it's all free.

WARNING: PSM2 ISN'T ABOUT...

Piss-poor, seen-it-before features on girls 'n' games. Or game violence. Or piracy in the games industry. It's not about *those* Japs being mad or D-list celebrities playing some random title. We don't review music CDs or ice creams. We won't waste space with such clichéd trash – we'll let other magazines do that.

PSM2 • OFTEN IMITATED • NEVER BETTERED

PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE
PSM2

CONTENTS

コンテンツ

PLAYING PS2 LONGER, HARDER, FASTER
コンテンツ

31 PAGES OF RUDE, OUTSPOKEN REVIEWS. NEW UK TITLES KICK OFF ON PG66

SPLINTER CELL ..... PAGE 76
The best Clancy title gets its first independent review.

WAR OF THE MONSTERS ..... PAGE 82
We come up with a monstrous judgment.

NBA STREET 2 ..... PAGE 46
You won't believe how much fun this is...

WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS

The call's gone out. She's the most wanted woman in gaming history and PSM2 are the first to catch her red-handed. No-one's seen more of the game than us, no-one's *played* more and no-one else can bring you the early verdict like we can. We know that when she's good, she's good. But when she's bad, is she any better? Find out now what a touch of scandal can do to a reputation on pg28.

X-MEN: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE ..... PAGE 50
As the first film trailers start to bite, we go claws-on with Wolvie...

DIE HARD: VENDETTA ..... PAGE 40
Big Mc and fries, please. The cop with a nose for trouble previews.

THIS MONTH IN PSM2

18 ACCELERATOR
The place with the hottest PS2 stories: news from developers, insider gossip and release info.
Backyard Wrestling 19
Alien Vs Predator Extinction . 19
Soul Calibur 2 Vs VF4 18
PSM2 Awards 23
Skate or Die 23
Rumble in the Jumble 26

34 COMING SOON
PSM2 goes hands-on with tomorrow's big games first.
Dark Chronicle 36
Die Hard: Vendetta 40
Def Jam Vendetta 44
NBA Street 2 46
Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter .. 48
X-Men: Wolverine's Revenge ... 50

124 OVERLOAD
The Hulk 124
The Great Escape 125
Star Trek Shattered Universe 125
X-Files: Resist or Serve 125
Starcraft: Ghost 126
Dead Aim 127
Urban Freestyle Soccer 127
Downtown Run 2 127

EVERY ISSUE
Letters 12
Absolute PS2 96
Subscriptions 120
Next Issue 128
Last Laugh 130

DARK CHRONICLE.....**PAGE 36**
We exclusively preview *Dark Cloud*'s wonderful sequel.

DEF JAM VENDETTA.....**PAGE 44**
Def or glory in the happenest human beatbox out there.

ENTER THE MATRIX.....**PAGE 54**
A licence that lives up to the hype? Surely not...

"THE LAST EVIL DEAD GAME WAS INDEED EVIL. AND IS NOW THANKFULLY DEAD." VIVA THQ - PG24

NEW TO PSM2?
WE RECOMMEND YOU GO HERE FIRST...

10 ON YOUR DVD
If you're keen, you've already seen this month's awesome DVD. If not, flick back here now and check out what you've got to watch when you get home...

12 LETTERS
Find out what *real* PS2 gamers are talking about.

18 ACCELERATOR
You don't get shots you've seen elsewhere or re-written press releases here. Just bull-free facts and informed opinion. Find out what's *really* important now.

28 TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS
Hands-on verdicts for the moves, the levels, the look and feel of Core's first outing on PlayStation 2. It's groundbreaking in every sense of the word...

ISSUE #34 "ARCHAEOLOGY IS RUBBISH"
Lara's been dragging her heels, but finally she's out and looking hotter than a sun-baked Skud. If there's one concept that encapsulates this game, it's choices. Multiple routes, multiple upgrades and multiple reasons why you'll keep coming back.

66 REVIEWS
Don't go shopping for PS2 titles unless you've checked out our essential scores first.

Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven 68
ISS3 72
Dark Angel.....74
Splinter Cell.....76
Vexx.....80
Savage Skies 81
Dynasty Warriors 3.....81
War of the Monsters 82
Jurassic Park: Project Genesis....84
Dakar 2.....85
Pride.....86
Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc.....88
Mystic Heroes.....91
G1 Jockey 3 89
Galarians: Ash.....90
Everblue 2/Ben Hur.....91

FEATURES
Extended PSM2 coverage of the biggest new PS2 title...

Enter The Matrix 54

102 PRO TIPS
Training you in the dark arts of PS2.

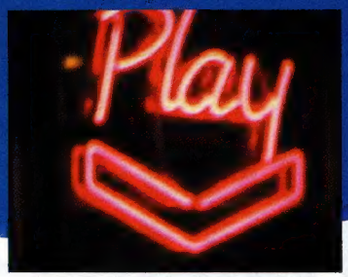
The Sims.....104
Evolution Skateboarding 104
The Mark of Kri.....105
Dr Muto.....105
Star Wars: The Clone Wars.....105
Battle Engine Aquila.....105
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin.....106
Blood Omen 2 106
Pro Evolution Soccer 2 106
SOS: The Final Escape 106
Contra: Shattered Soldier.....106
War of the Monsters.....106
Everblue 2.....106
Splinter Cell.....112
Devil May Cry 2.....116

DVD
The pick of this month's DVD releases reviewed ...**92**

CONTENTS
"WORD TO YOUR MOMMA. DOG." - PG44

YOUR QUICK FLICK GUIDE!

GAME NAME	PAGE	SECTION
Amplitude	20	Accelerator
ATV Quad Power Racing 2	76/104	Reviews/Pro Tips
Centre Court Hard Hitter 2	78	Reviews
Club Football	20	Accelerator
Cy Girls	20	Accelerator
Dakar 2	46	Previews
Dance Dance Revolution Max	127	Overload
Devil May Cry 2	80	Reviews
Die Hard: Vendetta	126	Overload
Dr Muto	70	Reviews
Drag-on Dragoon	127	Overload
Dredd Versus Death	55	Feature
Dynasty Warriors 4	127	Overload
Fear Effect	124	Overload
Alien Vs Predator Extinction	19	Accelerator
Backyard Wrestling	19	Accelerator
Bad Boys 2	26	Accelerator
Battle Engine Aquila	105	Pro Tips
Ben Hur: Blood of Braves	91	Reviews
Blood Omen 2	106	Pro Tips
Dakar 2	85	Reviews
Dark Angel	74	Reviews
Dark Chronicle	36	Previews
Dead Aim	127	Overload
Def Jam Vendetta	44	Previews
Devil May Cry 2	116	Pro Tips
Die Hard: Vendetta	40	Previews
Downtown Run 2	127	Overload
Dr Muto	105	Pro Tips
Dungeons & Dragons Heroes	127	Overload
Dynasty Warriors 3	81	Reviews
Enter the Matrix	54	Feature
Everblue 2	91/106	Reviews/Pro Tips
Evil Dead: Fistful of Boomstick	24	Accelerator
Evolution Skateboarding	104	Pro Tips
Frogger Beyond	26	Accelerator
G1 Jockey 3	89	Reviews
Galarians: Ash	90	Reviews
Great Escape, The	125	Overload
Hulk, The	124	Overload
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	106	Pro Tips
ISS3	72	Reviews
Jurassic Park: Project Genesis	84	Reviews
Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter	48	Previews
Mark of Kri, The	105	Pro Tips
Mortal Kombat:DA	114	Pro Tips
Mr Golf	85	Reviews
Mystic Heroes	91	Reviews
NBA Street 2	46	Previews
One Must Fall: Battlegrounds	26	Accelerator
Pride	86	Reviews
Pro Beach Soccer	26	Accelerator
Pro Evolution Soccer 2	106	Pro Tips
Raging Blades	24	Accelerator
Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc	88	Reviews
Savage Skies	81	Reviews
Sims, The	104	Pro Tips
Skate or Die	23	Accelerator
Soul Calibur 2	20	Accelerator
SOS: The Final Escape	106	Pro Tips
Sphinx	26	Accelerator
Splashdown 2	24	Accelerator
Splinter Cell	76/122	Reviews/Pro Tips
Star Trek Shattered Universe	125	Overload
Star Wars: The Clone Wars	105	Pro Tips
Starcraft: Ghost	126	Overload
Syberia	127	Overload
Tak and the Power of Juju	24	Accelerator
Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven	68	Reviews
Tomb Raider: TAOD	28	Cover Game
Urban Freestyle Soccer	127	Overload
Vexx	80	Reviews
Virtua Fighter 4 Evolution	20	Accelerator
War of the Monsters	82/106	Reviews/Pro Tips
Warhammer 40,000	24	Accelerator
XGRA	26	Accelerator
X-Files: Resist or Serve	125	Overload
X-Men: Wolverine's Revenge	50	Previews



"THE ORANGE WRITING TELLS YOU WHAT SECTION YOU'RE IN – THE BLUE HIGHLIGHTS WHAT YOU'RE ABOUT TO CHOOSE"

PSM2DVD34

Yo, sound the bell – school's in. Wick wick wickety wack. Doin' DVDs because we got it like that. Hold the front page, sucka – PSM2 DVD is bound for the rewind. Whoomp!

DVD/MAGAZINE SYSTEM
PSM2
VOL. 34 The HOTTEST game
NEW! DEF JAM VENDETTA
NEW! CHAOS LEGION
NEW! DARK CHRONICLE
NEW! FINAL FANTASY 10-2
Loaded with
15
WORLD PREMIERE!
ENTER THE MATRIX
BELIEVE IT! Over 10 minutes of exclusive action!
The game of 2003's biggest film – see it here first!
SEE: THE GRAPHICS! · THE FIGHTING! · THE BULLET TIME! · THE COOL MOVES! · MORE!
FIRST AGAIN!
DIE HARD: VENDETTA
"WELCOME TO THE PARTY, PAL!"
Potty-mouthed John McClane hits PS2 – you'll only see him in action right here!

ENTER THE MATRIX

Style. Chic. Cool. When The Matrix burst on to UK cinema screens in June 1999, it was rightly hailed as the pinnacle of all these qualities. Quite simply, it re-defined action films as we knew them – and the franchise is set to do it all over again this year. Twice. So naturally we're blubbing like Les Dennis with sheer joy to be the first PS2 mag to debut the long-awaited Matrix game.

Infogrames' *Enter The Matrix* has a story that runs parallel to events in the movies, and features new characters Ghost and Niobe. This month in our Accelerator section we premiere the first footage of the game in action, plus interviews with the cast and producer, and a look at a stunning CG sequence. It's shaping up to be one of the biggest videogame events of the year – and you can see it all here first in PSM2. Enough with the spiel. Sit back and see for yourselves...

GET THE MOST FROM YOUR DISC...

DOLBY 5.1 SOUND

The PSM2 DVD now sports full 5.1 support with portions of the DVD soundtrack and, where available, the game noise itself being presented in full Dolby Digital 5.1 surround sound. If you don't have the gear, fret not. Our disc works perfectly in stereo or mono.

PIN-SHARP PICTURE

We've optimised the presentation of the disc to provide high quality playback on any TV using any connection. But for maximum enjoyment, we recommend you get hold of a lead with S-Video connection for your PS2 (around £15). Either that or watch the disc in RGB-o-vision with a regular DVD player.

SYSTEM MODIFICATIONS

Want to make your DVD playback even louder and sharper through the lead that came with your PS2? Simply pause your disc (by pressing ▶❚❚) and locate the Set-Up option (top row and right). Go to Audio options and set the DVD Volume option to +2. Do the same for DVD Sharpness.

COMPLETE BUYER'S GUIDE

The PSM2 DVD isn't just a monthly collection of the hottest in-game action from the biggest new titles. It also features a review vault of every PS2 game, plus video-reviews of our top recommendations. Finished watching the footage? Try out our unique branching directory.

SHHH. IT'S A SECRET...

Finally, when you think you've explored the disc completely, you haven't. We've deposited some secret footage on the DVD. As always, we'll reveal where it was and what it was next month. In the meantime, to find out how to unlock last disc's egg, see over there...

THE BEST GAMES • THE BIGGEST DISC

NEW TO PSM2? START HERE...

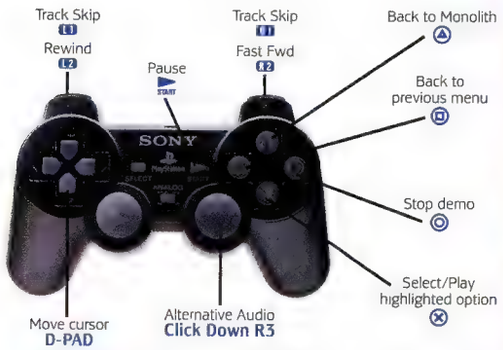
1. THE MONOLITH

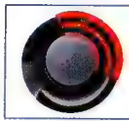
After thrilling to our full-on DVD intro, your journey through harsh reality brings you to the PSM2 Monolith – a peaceful and perfect place where you can choose from one of five PSM2 game-realms to visit.

THE MONOLITH: Here's where your journey starts. Explore every section to release three and a half hours of entertainment.

2. GETTING AROUND

Whether you're using a DualShock 2, PS2 remote, using a PC's mouse or simply watching through a DVD player, it's simple to find what you want. Here's the PS2 basics...





While you're watching Reviews, click down the R3 Analogue stick to hear what the PSM2 team think...

3. BROWSING

Your DVD has five main sections: Accelerator, Coming Soon, Reviews, Pro Tips and Extras. Each of these is split further for your ease and entertainment.

THE SUB NAVIGATOR
In each section you can move the blue highlight left to this column and choose similar parts of the disc.

MAIN MENU
Move the blue highlight down here to access all the other sections of the DVD – no need to go back to the start. Magic.

GAMES
Scroll the blue highlight up and down here – click ⊗ once to select, then again to play.

EASY GUIDE Orange shows you what section you're in, blue what you're about to choose.

THIS MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS...

FINAL FANTASY X-2: Now with added guns. See Yuna smoke ass in Square's *FFX* spin off.

DEF JAM VENDETTA: It's got a lot of love for the streets.

DARK CHRONICLE: It'll eat up your life like a fat man eats jello.

DIE HARD: VENDETTA: It'll make you make fists with your toes.

ACCELERATOR

The biggest developments from around the globe in one eye-rinsing news burst.

Press ⊗ to play the newsreel.

COMING SOON

Home to upcoming games, it's split into five zones.

Hands-On Previews
All the latest game footage and trailers.

Developer Insight
We corner friends from the videogame world and make them speak for you.

Spy Cam
Our game spies are always ready to bag behind-the-scenes footage that other mags wouldn't even dare to record. It's exclusive, for your eyes only.

Overload
It's the best of the rest – exactly the same as in the magazine.

Import Round-Up
From hot new games to multi-million best sellers. Here's what's moving and shaking in Japan right now.

Press ← to use the Sub Navigator and make a selection.

REVIEWS

All the insight of PSM2's famous reviews on a DVD.

Recent Releases
See 'em in action, check the PSM2 verdict and listen to the team emptying their heads into your ears.

Absolute PS2
A unique branching directory of every PSM2 review – an essential resource, updated every month.

Must Buy
We've broken down the entire PS2 back catalogue into popular types of game. Choose your favourite genre, and then check out our recommended titles – click ⊗ to see the review and R3 for commentary.

Press ← to use the Sub Navigator and make a selection.

NBA STREET VOL. 2: All-new basketballing action.

CHAOS LEGION: Mind-blowing footage of Capcom's slick new hack-n-slasher, direct from Japan. Do not miss this, fool.

PRO TIPS

No other mag brings you top guides and reader show-offs.

Pro Dojo
We want to make you famous. Take part in our challenges (see pg98) and earn a place in DVD history. Note: the quality of playback may suffer due to source material being supplied on VHS.

The Experts
We single out a star performance each month. This can be from one of PSM2 team, the game's developer, an award-winning pro gamer, or you...

Access All Areas
A massive volume of life-saving tips, codes and cheats.

Press ← to use the Sub Navigator and make a selection.

ISS 3: Hands-on footage of the latest incarnation of Konami's 'other' football series.

EXTRAS

You'll find Showreel and Random Factor selections hidden away here. Play the entire content of the disc in order or – hey! – at random.

LAST MONTH...

Last month's secret footage was an informal chat with Hipperty-Hop legend, Method Man. Head down to the Nav bar on the last page of Reviews and go right off the end. Bada-bing!

LETTERS

THE LOUDEST VOICES IN THE PLAYSTATION 2 UNIVERSE

GAME
www.game.co.uk

WINNER!
Every issue, the writer of the Star Letter gets the PS2 game of their choice in return, courtesy of the bright sparks at GAME. Simply tag which game you'd like to the bottom of your letter or email and, if you're the chosen one, GAME will be sending you a copy to your door. Now – entertain us and your fellow readers...

THE VOICE OF CHOICE

"WITH THE CONTINUED GROWTH OF SONY, AND THE DEMISE OF COMPANIES SUCH AS SEGA AND NINTENDO, SHOULD WE LOOK AHEAD TO A SINGLE CONSOLE?"

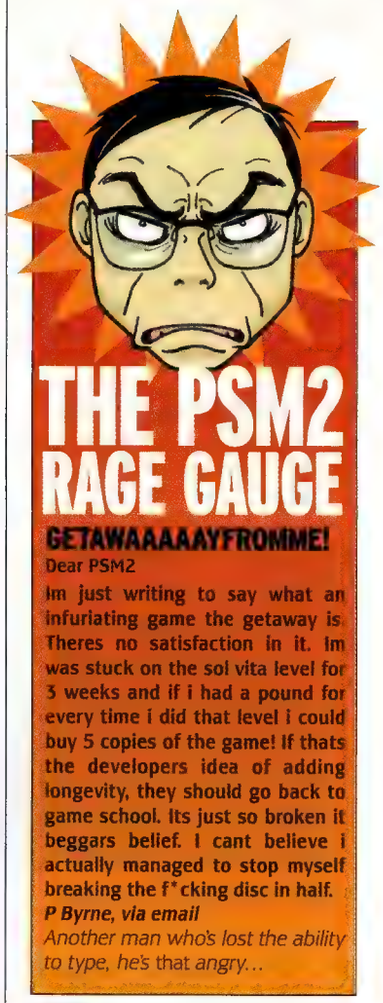
Dear PSM2,

Having read your article in issue #33 entitled '2003 – The Year It All Went Wrong', I became highly sceptical, and two issues arose which worried me. First, and perhaps the most important issue, is there a future for console gaming? The result of the various bankruptcies could be the larger companies neglecting the console market and heading for the growing PC market.

Second, the 'boom or bust' industry will inevitably lead to the collapse of more smaller companies (especially if they continue to produce sub-standard games), which also makes me ponder – would this lead to one massive multinational company controlling the whole games industry? Having studied the sales figures, PS2 is the clear leader. But with the continued growth of Sony, and the demise of companies such as Sega and Nintendo (pioneers of early videogames), should we look ahead to a single console, which could be exploited both price-wise and quality-wise by the sole controlling company? There's no doubt that all developers producing for a single console would result in an even wider choice and possibly higher quality games, but if the majority of developers are pushed out of the frame by the larger companies, then I can't help but feel that this domination would be exploited, resulting in (even) higher prices. As a consequence, more people would 'defect' to PC gaming, and console gaming would be a thing of the past.

Harry Holt
Nottingham

Are we heading towards the same set-up as the music and film industries – two or three large umbrella companies/studios providing cash and a publishing route for everyone else? Maybe...



THE PSM2 RAGE GAUGE

GETAWAAAAAYFROMME!

Dear PSM2

Im just writing to say what an infuriating game the getaway is. Theres no satisfaction in it. Im was stuck on the sol vita level for 3 weeks and if i had a pound for every time i did that level i could buy 5 copies of the game! If thats the developers idea of adding longevity, they should go back to game school. Its just so broken it beggars belief. I cant believe i actually managed to stop myself breaking the f*cking disc in half.

P Byrne, via email

Another man who's lost the ability to type, he's that angry...

This is your chance to air your views on the hot potato of the moment: PS2 online gaming – no really, please do tell us if you give a shit?

EMAIL: PSM2@FUTURENET.CO.UK

WRITE TO: LETTERS, PSM2, FUTURE PUBLISHING LTD, 30 MONMOUTH ST, BATH BA1 2BW

STEAMING

Dear PSM2

Having just watched the utter steaming pile of CG guff that is Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within, I felt compelled to write my grievances aimed at the makers of videogames.

The whole 'we want our game to be like an interactive movie' thing is a tiresome load of old balls. If the idea for the future of games by those who make them is to give the gamer some kind of interactive movie experience, then count me out.

Games need to be challenging, amusing and entertaining. Is it not possible that *MGS2* might have hit the 100 mark if Kojima had concentrated on emphasising the excellent gameplay rather than all those awful cutscenes? If I want to empathise with a fictional character, I'll read a book or watch a film. But playing a game generally involves wanting to shoot/maim/hump your on-screen characters, so who needs empathy?

Game/film tie-ins are natural bedmates. But when the genres become blurred, all that results is both mediums lose out. If, as hinted at in your interview with Core Design's Adrian Smith, 2003 is the year of PS3 whispers, let's also hope that 2003 is the year the voice of gameplayers becomes an unavoidable roar: we want great games not shitty interactive movies!

I don't need to feel like I am sharing a soft drink with Tiger Woods, I'm off to kick his arse at golf – and that's how it should be.

Simon Dickson
Castlebar, Eire

An old argument maybe, but doesn't it just keep on giving. We'd be interested to hear what you think of *The Getaway*, Simon...

NORKS

Dear PSM2

In response to 'Trinity's' letter in issue #33, I'd like to show my disgust at game designers.

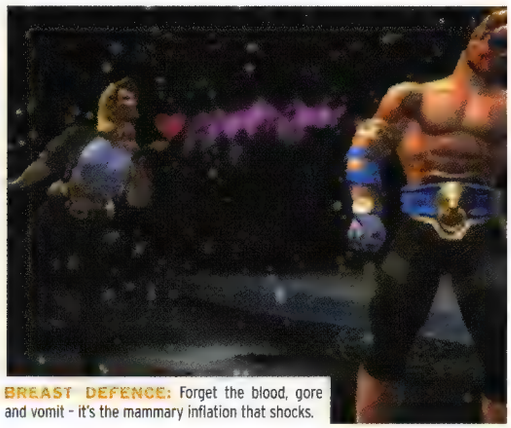
The other week I sat down for a game of *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance* with my brother and he said: "I'm going to be her with the big norks... look at those norks!" I find that the size of characters' boobs has inflated. I mean, come on! If *Mortal Kombat's* Sonya was a real person she would have two black eyes from just walking down the stairs! I feel that these games are very demoralizing to all us girls.

What's going to be next, eh? A men-only game where you can enlarge 'norks' to the desired size? I'm sure it would bring cash pouring in as slobbering men race to buy it. Anyway, I feel much better now for getting that off my chest. He he...

Rachel McVey
Southport

Demoralized? Imagine how the weaker members of our man-team feel when faced with controlling the likes of Steve Fox or Dante. Boys like 'norks' – they don't always need to be the size of spacehoppers, though...

WRITE TO PSM2 WITH: YOUR THOUGHTS ON GAME DESIGN... THE GAMES YOU WANT IN 2003... PROVOCATIVE QUESTIONS...



BREAST DEFENCE: Forget the blood, gore and vomit – it's the mammary inflation that shocks.

TOILET

Dear PSM2

The Sims – what exactly is the point? Somebody please tell me!

I played the PC version for all of five minutes. I mean for heaven's sake, if I wanted to cook lunch, go to the toilet, visit friends and family, I could do it in real life. Why would I spend hours upon hours in front of my PS2 playing what looks like a limited, poor imitation of real life?

The people in *The Sims* don't even speak, they just mumble in different tones. Why'd anyone care about their lives when they don't even know what they're talking about?

I play games because they allow me to do things that I couldn't (and probably wouldn't) normally do in real life. For instance, mowing down old ladies and hobos with a sports car while listening to Broken Wings by Mister Mister, or tranquillizing enemy soldiers in *MGS2* before throwing them overboard.

Steven Bingham
Dundee

It's all about variety, Steven. *The Sims* didn't go straight to number one for no reason – it's a game that appeals to a far wider range of gamers than, say, *MGS2*. Yes, there's real-world stuff to work through, but it's an aspirational thing. Turn a group of misfits into a bunch of millionaires? Lovely jubbly.

STREAM

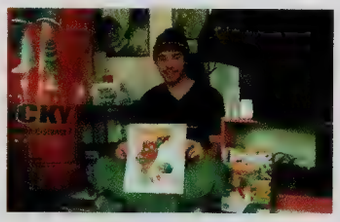
Dear PSM2

I'm really excited about Enix and Squaresoft joining forces. When two

I SIM-PLY DON'T GET IT...
Do you get it? Often? Do you get it often? Hah. Lovely stuff. Anyway, *if you do get it*, write in and let Scotland's Steven Bingham know what the point is.

GOIN' POSTAL

Loose chippings from the missive motorway that lodged in a tyre or, more seriously, took a flickin' nick out of the PSM2 windscreen.



HAMPERS
I was delighted to have won one of your Christmas hampers – it's the first time in my life I've won anything, so thank you for making my day.
Terry Murphy
Brockley, London
Hey, don't mention it.

MONEY
Is it just me, or are some game companies just out for the money these days rather than making us diehard gamers happy?.
Ricky Welford
Via email
Get this Mr Welford – *all* game companies are just out for the money. Sorry.

SHOP
If I owned a shop I'd play all the games and put them on display even if they were only there for a while.
Anthony Matthews
Epsom
Phew.

GIRLS
Why don't you do a games mag for girls?
Lou Vincent
Via email
All girls please write in now, just so we can get an idea of how many of you there are...

large rivals join together to share their expertise, it can only be good news.

Could it be the start of a wave of coilitions? Let's hope so, because these two companies have done something that should result in a small stream of excellent games.

Final Fantasy 10 had problems, as all games do, but what if Enix had been able to help iron them out (and vice versa)?
Phil Tomlinson
Wotton-U-Edge

A wave of coilitions you say? We'd like to see Rockstar and LucasArts getting it on (*GTA Mos Eisley*?) – and in a perfect world Sony would let Nintendo get on board to help out with that elusive PS2 platform star and the development of the handheld 'Station we all want...

ASHAMED
Dear PSM2
Do you know what makes me annoyed right now? Reputations. I know some people who only have five games in their collection that they actually like: *GTA3*, *GTA: Vice City*, *The Getaway*, *State of Emergency* and *Hitman 2*. Notice the trend?

All of these games are either 18 certificates or wrapped in controversy. I'm not saying all of these games are bad – I love the *GTA* games – but the people I wish I didn't know want them for all the wrong reasons.

I want *Vice City* because it's such a damn fine game. What I'm trying to say is, it would be nice if one of them bought *Kingdom Hearts* over *Mortal Kombat*, but you and me both know that won't happen. Hell, even I'm too ashamed to buy *Kingdom Hearts* in case my mates saw it. I mean honestly, Disney isn't exactly the coolest thing right now...
Will Warnock
Liverpool

PS You know that sad case that said a PlayStation 2 is better than a wife or girlfriend? Tell him that a PS2 doesn't have breasts.

Your PS2 doesn't have breasts, sorry, *norks?* Return it immediately.

SENSATIONALIST
Dear PSM2
I am an avid reader of your magazine and I wanted to comment on your garbage review of *Pride FC*.

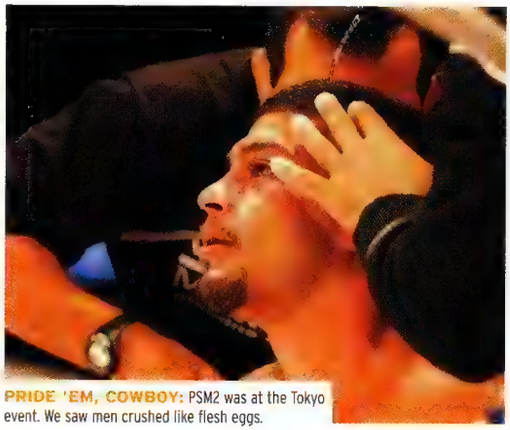
Being a huge fan of Pride and its American counterpart, the UFC, I was offended by your hatchet job on the sport and your blatant lies and sensationalism about the Pride 21 event at the Tokyo dome.

"Pride's only rules are no groin shots and no eye gouging," you said. Not true. Pride has many rules, including no headbutting, no biting, no holding the ropes to avoid takedowns and no elbows.

"So brutal was the match that a fight later on had to be momentarily paused because they were slipping about in Herring's blood," you said.

Bullshit. Herring suffered a broken orbital bone in that match and bled but it was hardly the bloodbath that you made it out to be (yes, I have seen the show on tape). Your proclamation that "this is as close to two people killing each other as you can get" drives home your lack of respect and research on the sport.

I'll still buy your magazine and enjoy it, but please stick to reviewing games, and don't print three-page sensationalist reviews on a medium you know nothing about.
Steven Breen
Via email



PRIDE 'EM, COWBOY: PSM2 was at the Tokyo event. We saw men crushed like flesh eggs.

"YOUR PROCLAMATION THAT 'THIS IS AS CLOSE TO TWO PEOPLE KILLING EACH OTHER AS YOU CAN GET' DRIVES HOME YOUR LACK OF RESPECT"

Dan G, the 'sensationalist' author of the *Pride* feature, responds...

"The piece was indeed sensationalist merely because Pride is a sensation. It was written from a newcomer's perspective, with the backing of THQ and Pride.

"The sheer excitement of Pride got the better of us. To many it's just a sport – to us it was a life altering event. Surely you don't resent us falling under Pride's spell?

"OK, so there are a few more rules than we listed. Like 'no guns'. Or 'no ripping off of shorts'. Or 'no dissing One True Voice'. But we stick by the comparative lawlessness of Pride. You seem to have no qualms with us calling it 'the most violent sport in the world' so let's not nit-pick.

"Herring's blood incident. Seen it on video? Well we were at the ringside and that man lost pints. Pints! And, yes, someone did slip over in his blood later. Hilarious!

"We respect Pride and everyone who fights and works to put together such an amazing sporting event. Our only crime is our enthusiasm. Your expertise in the finer points of Pride is duly noted, please don't resent us getting overexcited at the sight of two blokes genuinely kicking each others' heads in."

SHOCKED
Dear PSM2
Although I usually agree with your reviews and ratings, I was amazed to see *Ratchet & Clank* receive a score of 91% and the title Best Platformer in issue #30.

If that wasn't enough, I noticed that *Kingdom Hearts* received 87%.

Although these two games are in different categories, I was still shocked to see that *R&C* had beaten *KH*.

I want to know who wrote those reviews and ask them if they had really played *R&C*, where the camera often gets stuck behind walls and other obstacles.

Also, in your DVD review of *R&C*, you said that one of the reasons it became best platformer was because it looks great. It doesn't look bad, but

LETTERS

THE LOUDEST VOICES IN THE PLAYSTATION 2 UNIVERSE

HAIL, GEEZER: OK, *The Getaway* was *all right*. Its sequel's on the way - what do you want to see changed?

when compared to *KH* it looks like a PSone game.

By the way, is there any truth in the rumours I have been hearing about a PlayStation 3 coming out in the near future?

Cody Lester
Australia

Cheers for your comments, Cody – and, yes, you're right: the two games *are* in separate categories although things are becoming increasingly blurred at the boundaries of all gaming genres.

***Kingdom Hearts* is an RPG that has some basic platforming elements to it, while *Ratchet & Clank* is definitely a crossover between a traditional platformer and third-person action adventure.**

Despite this, we've always attempted to impose some kind of structure on our scoring system. As such, *KH* is more RPG than anything else and comes second in the rankings with only *Final Fantasy 10* above it – high praise indeed.

As for *R&C* it's easily the best platformer on PS2. *Jak & Daxter* is showing its age and *Maximo* just can't match it on looks or variance in gameplay even though, we admit, the camera is better behaved in both.

PS3? Hey, just check out our 'world exclusive' on pg62...

ROBOT DOWNEY JNR: The merits of *Ratchet & Clank* stir Aussie passions. But do they stir yours?

DON'T WRITE TO PSM2 WITH... WORRIES ABOUT HOW MUCH BETTER THAN PS2 SOME OTHER CONSOLE COULD BE...

BELLY

Dear PSM2

Last month in particular I enjoyed reading the special investigation into the videogames market. You hear so many other magazines and websites claiming this is going to be the golden age for the industry and that by the end of the year it'll be 'bigger than the movie industry'. At least you have written the true facts.

Anyway, when I read your article I started to wonder why so many developers are going belly-up, but that's when I realised that the European games industry is entirely aimed at the casual gamer. Several of my mates bought their PS2s around the time of *GTA3* and have only bought about four other games since, and all all of them have been big budget releases such as *FIFA 2003* and *The Getaway*.

I myself have quite a large collection of games, including some greats and some duff ones. But at least I have tried to vary my purchases between well established brands and lesser known ones.

I was in my local game shop the other day and stumbled on their clearance section. What did I see languishing there after only a few months since they were released, but *Haven* and *Kingdom Hearts* priced at £14.99 and £24.99 respectively! Are all more original titles going to end up like this? I'm sure these prices wouldn't cover development costs.

Big companies like EA need to get off their behinds and stop throwing out *FIFA* after *FIFA*. I agree with Jason Mitchell's letter last issue – originality is going to be the biggest issue this year. If it ain't sorted soon, we're all going to be playing the same games, repackaged time and time again.

Andrew Rooke
Manchester

We still believe a happy medium could be reached if original, niche titles could be released at a mid price-point. Problem solved. Right?

BUTCHER

Dear PSM2

The Getaway's story is very predictable – it's like EastEnders with swearing and guns. I couldn't help wondering if at some point I'd run into Pat Butcher with an AK blowing the shit out of some helpless pedestrian.

Andrew Limb
Mansfield

All correspondence is assumed to be for publication unless marked otherwise. PSM2 reserve the right to edit readers' letters for length and clarity.

GLOBAL SPILLAGE

Letters from around the world in an easy-to-comprehend planet-gram.

YOU WHAT?

Who's been saying what this issue.

PS2's future
Online gaming
Review scores
Game originality
The Getaway

PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE
PSM2

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DOORS OPEN 11.04.03

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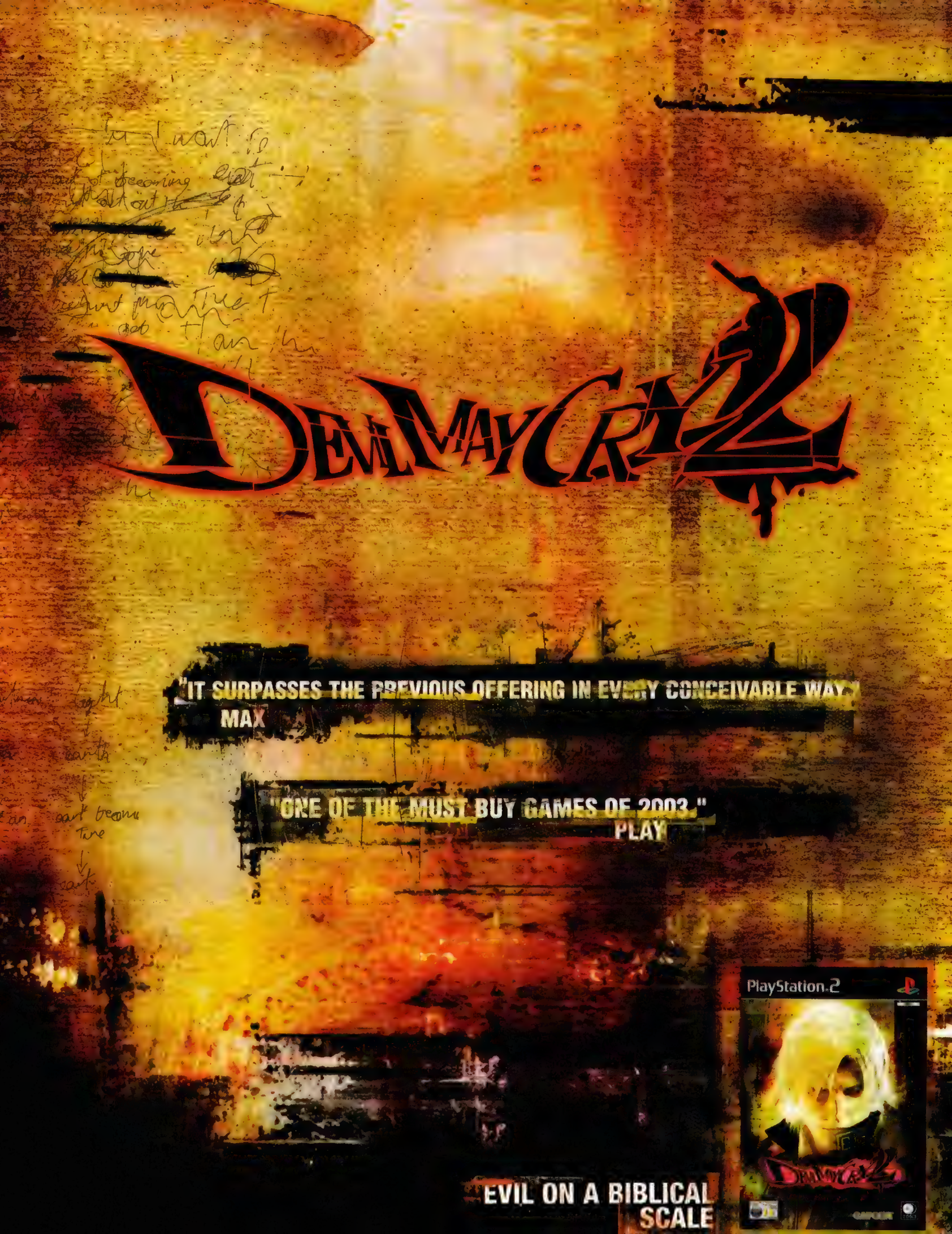
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EVIL ON A BIBLICAL SCALE

PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE
PSM2
ACCELERATOR
ニュース

SYPHON FILTER: The PSone fave is getting the PS2 online treatment, along with *Destruction Derby Arena*.

BEACH VOLLEYBALL: This is in no way a cheap cash-in on the popularity of a key Xbox title. Repeat, not.

>INDUSTRY RUMOURS 가십

2003: RUMOUR OVERLOAD

Sony schedule leaks *Syphon Filter Online*, as *Glass Rose*, *Castlevania* and *Destruction Derby Arena* lead E3 charge.

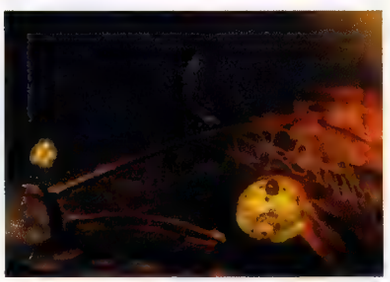
The PS2 release schedule is consolidating with some decent AAA product, after a turbulent start to the new year. Sony were first to stimulate the speculation, as an unattributed document filtered onto the Internet, promising the releases of *Destruction Derby Arena*, *Jak & Daxter 2* and *Kin* – which was rumoured to be the long awaited FPS from Dutch developers Lost Boys. Sony are reportedly disappointed at the leak, but haven't denied its accuracy so far. Days later, PlayStation inventor Ken Kutaragai fuelled the excitement by announcing *Syphon Filter*, *Bomberman* and a range of EA sports games as forthcoming online PS2 titles during a Sony press conference in South Korea.

PSM2 can now exclusively confirm the existence of *Destruction Derby Online*. Ex PSM2 contributor Danny Wallace – now of Dave Gorman TV fame – tipped us off, after receiving an email from a member of the development team. Why? The game is going to feature billboards advertising Wallace's forthcoming book 'Join Me', a comedy cult which implores its members to spread the word. Other *unconfirmed* Sony games that we can probably dismiss include *Downhill Domination*, *Dogs Tale*, *Flipnick* and *Chaindive*.

"A DOCUMENT FILTERED ONTO THE INTERNET, PROMISING THE RELEASE OF DESTRUCTION DERBY ARENA"

Capcom continue to innovate with their motion-captured adventure *Glass Rose*, where you play a time-travelling psychic journalist (don't get many of those to the Euro) investigating a homicide set in 1929. The lead character, Takhashi, is based on real life Japanese actor Masahiro Matsuoka. The game should debut at E3, before an autumn Japanese release.

GLASS ROSE: The animation and character models are staggering – quite a departure from *Devil May Cry 2*.



GLASS ROSE: Capcom's latest is something of a mystery, but looks like a crime-solving version of *Silent Hill*.

Finally, Konami are re-inventing their critically-acclaimed *Castelvania* series under the supervision of respected producer Koji Igareshi. Expect vampire hunting, gothic hues and 'incredible visuals' when the game makes its E3 debut. Other hot new games include a mysterious Eidos title with a commercial licence, plus a Criterion game which *won't* be *Burnout 3*. After a relatively poor 2002, and the furore surrounding *BMX XXX*, Acclaim are reclaiming the moral ground with *Beach Volleyball*. Oh, no, we've just seen the screenshots...

PSM2 RECKONS *With over 30 million machines sold worldwide, the PS2 release schedule was always set to blossom. Sony's dedication to original product bodes well for discerning gamers in 2003. First news as it breaks.*

>FIRST LOOK 7/15/11

SURELY THAT'S A FOUL, REF?

He's got hold of the thumbtacks! That MDogg's got the thumbtacks! Christ, ref, are you *blind*? Ref?

Oof. Erk. Ooh – he's not going to... oww. If you've never watched the DVDs – soon to be released in the UK, fight fans – Backyard Wrestling's a hypnotic mix of generation Jackass and the WWE. Sometimes it's talented, enthusiastic amateurs doing amazing moves at great personal risk. More often, however, it's stupid kids powerbombing each other through flaming barbed-wire tables. Either way, it's almost impossible to turn off.

The game's being developed by Paradox, the team behind *X-Men 2: Mutant Academy* and *X-Men: Next Dimension*, both of which are perfectly decent beat-em-ups notable for their large destructible environments, which they've helpfully carried over into this game. It'll also feature well-known extreme wrestlers like Sabu and Mad Man Pondo, alongside emerging backyard veterans such as MDogg 2, Josh Prohibition and Karnage. Plus, there'll be the added bonus of being able to play as

SHEIK, RATTLE AND ROLL: Unconventional characters, outdoor grappling and not a pair of pants in sight.

"STUPID KIDS POWERBOMBING EACH OTHER THROUGH FLAMING TABLES"

STAPLE MATCH: The wrestlers takes no prisoners - gah, we said staple the bill to his cheeks. His *cheeks*.

Violent J and Shaggy 2 Dope – otherwise known as Eminem-baiting facepaint wearers the Insane Clown Posse.

Unusually for a wrestling game, none of the action takes place in a ring – you'll be fighting across backyards (naturally), mansions and malls, each with their own environmental hazards to avoid.

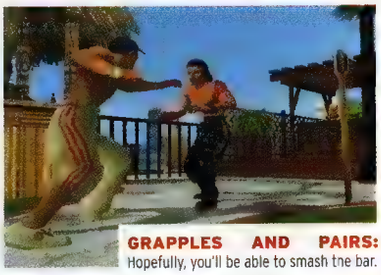
Everything's a potential weapon or threat, from patio furniture to snooty butlers, and most objects will at least react if you're thrown/jump onto them. An advanced damage system compliments the ensuing chaos, with each wrestler able to suffer three levels of wounding across all of their 17 body parts.

At the moment, not all the possibilities are in there, but we're assured that you'll eventually be able to juice people with barbed wire, smash them through tables and set them on fire. And the referee? There, um, *isn't* one.

PSM2 RECKONS *Our only reservation here is the lack of variety on offer – with no ladder matches, tag-team or creation options available, so it'll be more like a straight beat-em-up than the traditional multi-layered free-for-all we'd expect. Still, eh? Get the lighttubes!*

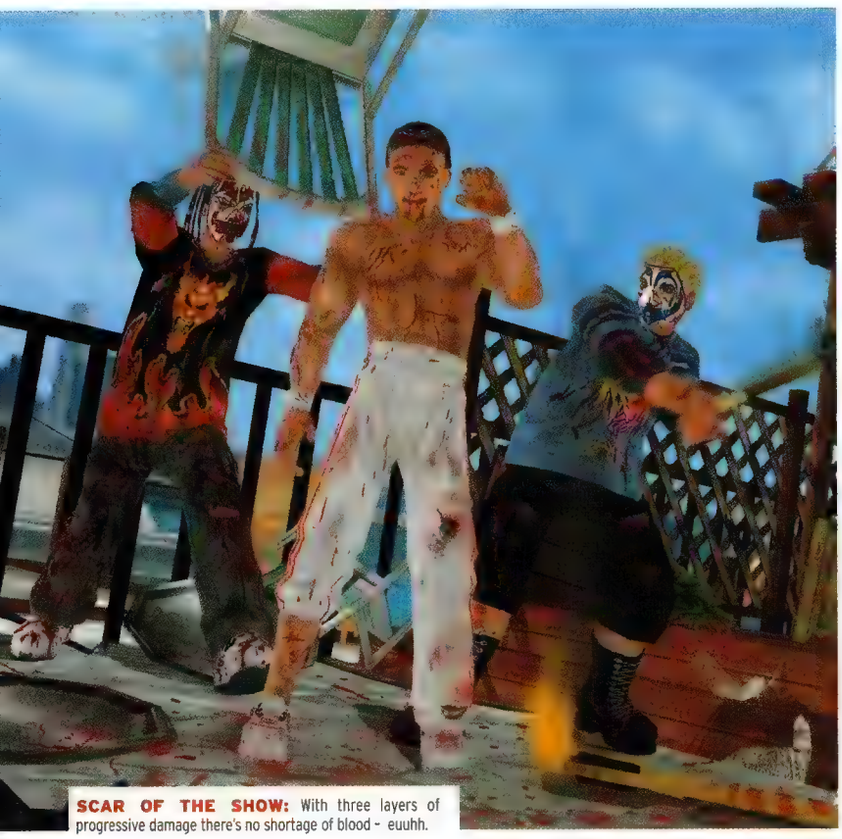
ME SO HORNY

The luckiest man on the BYW circuit is the Masked Horn Dog. His opponents? Pretty ladies – such as WCW perma-tan icon Tylene 'Major Gunns' Buck. His gimmick? Erm, priapism. His special move? The Triple Tripod – you don't even want to know. He's in the game, as are several of the Backyard Babes – starlets who make up for their lack of wrestling knowledge with their willingness to DDT each other into custard. It's a recontextualisation of sisterhood. We think.



GRAPPLES AND PAIRS: Hopefully, you'll be able to smash the bar.

TEARS OF A CLOWN: An Insane Clown Posse member prepares for pain.



SCAR OF THE SHOW: With three layers of progressive damage there's no shortage of blood - euuhh.

ALIENS VS PREDATOR: EXTINCTION

Look at the pictures on the left, note the subtle and intricate differences between the two, and then tick the box of the image you prefer. This is not a trick question. Well, come on then, we're waiting...

Well done! You are officially Sure Way Ltd's commercial consultant. Having the simply requisite eight figure exceptional character models and several brow-moistening levels of menace. Why, you'd have to be a stark raving loony to cancel such a game. Or have Stevie Wonder and baseball cap strapped boardroom admirers approving products by touch and smell alone – which frankly, might be a shade hazardous to consumption. This game looks great. Yes, great. You probably want to play it more than breathing, don't you? Ah, now we're talking.

Unknown to you, your mental image of Gene Simmons like Mr Blobby? Aw – there are now your Blobby LAS custody development bib. Anyway, the art on the left is taken from EA's recently canned *Aliens: Colonial Marines* – an extremely promising FPS, while the one on the right is taken from its replacement *Aliens vs Predator: Extinction* – an FPS which makes *Army Man* look like a sunny weekend in the Maldives. Yet you just keep telling yourself sanity is relative, and we promise to visit your assessor in a few years.

MISHIMA ACCOMPLISHED: *Tekken's* grandaddy won't have a weapon - just shiny metal cufflinks to deflect blows.

COMBAT

VF4 Evo is undeniably hardcore, with minimal concession to newbies, and probably the most balanced fighting system of all time. Quite simply, you can counter almost every attack with exquisite timing and mastery of the controls. Never have three buttons – punch, kick and guard – been combined with such subtle effect. Combos can be devastating, but the skill lies in studied application and instant reflexes. On the other hand, *Soul Calibur 2* is more immediate for button bashers, though no less visceral, vital or strategic. The big difference is the inclusion of weapons, which can be used to block or counter blows, reversing the flow of play. The action flows more organically than *VF4*, but lacks the purity. Tellingly, for every person who plays *Tekken* in Japanese arcades, another *nine* play *VF4 Evo*.

VF4 Evo is better if... You demand intricately balanced attacks combined with explicit timing and an unrivalled sense of mastery.

Soul Calibur 2 is better if... You want instant results and don't mind losing games to a button-mashing loon.

>HEAD TO HEAD ファイヌ

SOUL VIRTUA

No waffle, hyperbole or cronyism – just five key areas that will decide the forthcoming struggle for beat-em-up supremacy.

You might be glancing over the page at this point and finding your eyes starting to glaze over. Please don't worry, this is a perfectly natural reaction.

While we're all supposed to love *VF4* – y'know, it's Sega – and simply adore *Soul Calibur 2* – ooh, Dreamcast, now there's a machine... – truth is, both of these games are relics of a bygone age. Honestly, when was the last time you were stupidly excited about a beat-em-up? *Street Fighter 2? Tekken 3?* The genre has been stuck firmly in a rut since the late '90s and needs something, *anything* to resurrect some mainstream interest. The sun is setting on arena-based scrappers – and with Japan's premier beat-em-up developers going head-to-head – for once, we'll all be looking to the East.

Rather than warbling on about how 'brilliant' it's going to be to play slightly tweaked versions of – admittedly good – games, we've listed the five key areas that'll ultimately decide whether you stump up £40. Goh Hinogami might be the only *VF4* character who can counter tech-rolls, but, honestly, wouldn't you rather be whacking someone with a piano-sized hammer?

Whether you're a beat-em-up virgin, *Tekken* disciple or disillusioned *SF2* nostalgist, the key battles are listed here. Tenner on *VF4 Evo*, anyone? *Hmmm?*

LIGHT FANTASTIC: The spot effects are first class.

CHARACTERS

OK, this boils down to your love of realism. *VF4*'s cast are a physically unexceptional dojo of ninjas, kickboxers and old men, while *SC2* offers grizzly behemoths, leather-clad fetishists and, er, old men – in the form of *Tekken* fave Heihachi Mishima. While we love *VF4*'s acrobatic monk Lei Fei, we'd much rather be smashing heads with grumpy old Mitsurugi.

VF4 Evo is better if... You want painstakingly accurate fighting techniques.

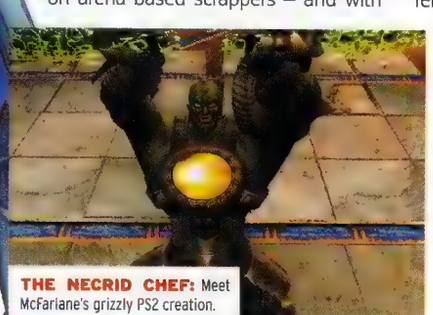
Soul Calibur 2 is better if... You want to whack chunky goons with an axe.

WHAT'S NEW?

SOUL CALIBUR 2

Publisher: EA
Release: Summer

1) **22 characters, including returning favourites Misurugi, Cassandra, Raphael, Talim and Yun Sung, with up to four costume changes each.**
2) PS2 exclusive character, *Tekken*'s nappy-wearing pensioner Heihachi Mishima, plus nasty green giant Necrid, designed by Todd 'Spawn' McFarlane.
3) **Over 200 weapons, including axes, swords, whips and hammers.**
4) Revised blocking system – use timed taps of the Guard button to parry and counter incoming blows until your weapon breaks under the strain.
5) ***Tekken 4*-style arena walls allowing complex juggle combos, plus traditional ring outs.**
6) New aerial counter moves plus dodges.
7) **Revised Edge Master mode – you can roam the map picking fights and earning weapons.**



THE NECRID CHEF: Meet McFarlane's grizzly PS2 creation.

TAKI THAT: Boff! Your weapon will break after multiple blows.

CALIBUR 2 VS FIGHTER EVOLUTION

DEPTH

VF4 Evo is deeper than a CIA conspiracy, with thousands of split-second attacks, reversals, counter-reversals and dodges. There's even the natty Kumite mode where you train a computer AI character from scratch to fight in your own image. When *VF4* first arrived on PS2, Joel left his PS2 on overnight so his acrobatic protégé could practice.

If the prospect of performing Akira's Soukoshou attack – Press P+K+G,B,FD,P+G then D,F or B,P – leaves you unfazed, this could be the challenge you're seeking. *Soul Calibur 2* is more immediate, placing the emphasis on rapid combos and attacking play. While the basic moves are simple to perform, the timing and positioning is crucial – like early *SF2*, or in a round-about way *PES2*. Impressively, your fighter responds almost exactly how you'd expect given the rhythm of your button presses – intuitive to the last.

VF4 Evo is better if... You're a voracious memory bank with time to spare and you have equally-dedicated rivals to impress.

Soul Calibur 2 is better if... You want a game you can enjoy with booze – relying on innate skills, not a notepad full of combos.

GOH FOR IT: The *VF4* newbies square up - Brad's speed and versatility against Goh's strength and brutal choke moves.

SHUN ALWAYS SHINES: The drunken OAP lurches back.

VISUALS

The original *Virtua Fighter 4* had lovely dynamic snow effects – watch those footprints shuffle – and gorgeous animation. The sequel offers more of the same, but with 50/60Hz options, faster loading and – get this – no jaggies. Equally, *Soul Calibur 2* is a work of eye-caressing majesty. The close-up replays are so detailed, you almost want to pull your family and friends into the room, while cooing and pointing like a child at a tropical aquarium to share in its breathtaking beauty. The animation is fluid, the collisions exquisite and juddering – basically, it's one of the best-looking games in history. Sorry, we did promise not to get excited.

VF4 Evo is better if... You want distinctive animation, fluidity and dazzling environmental effects.

Soul Calibur 2 is better if... You want a game you'd marry for passion and sod the consequences.

AOI SAY: These are the very first PS2 screens - lovely, eh?

OPTIONS

Virtua Fighter 4 is stacked with options, including a new Virtual Arcade mode where you undertake RPG-style quests, plus an enhanced Kumite Create-A-Fighter mode, revamped user-friendly Training options and Versus battles. The game might be deep, but the tutorial options are unrivalled – a big improvement on *MK: Deadly Alliance*'s slooow-loading Konquest mode. *Soul Calibur 2* includes Arcade, Versus, Time Attack and Survival modes, plus the ever-popular Team Battle mode, where two players pit themselves against up to eight fighters in a last-man-standing tag battle. There's also an enhanced Edge Master mode, where you travel about a map earning weapons from your defeated opponents. Rather than straight bouts, some of the fights only let you score hits with counter blows, or poison you so your energy slowly seeps away.

VF4 Evo is better if... You're both a teacher *and* a student inside, aching for the ultimate challenge.

Soul Calibur 2 is better if... You just want to play on your own and bang through a varied Story mode.

WHAT'S NEW?

VIRTUA FIGHTER EVOLUTION

Publisher: Sega Europe
Release: Summer

1) **Two new fighters – Italian kickboxer and Del Piero lookalike Brad Burns, plus menacing pseudo-vamp and Judo master Goh Hinogami.**
2) Enhanced Kumite mode.
3) **Virtual arcade with RPG style quests, allowing players to enrich the *Virtua Fighter 4 Evo* experience by linking up to VF.NET.**
4) Battle against CPU player data from actual Japanese *VF4* arcade gamers. Plus there's replay data of many of those famous *Virtua Fighter* players.
5) **Improved character balance plus revised stages.**
6) No 'jaggies' like *VF4*, with progressive mode and faster loading.
7) **Extra movies and intros due to larger capacity DVD.**
8) **Full screen 50hz/60hz mode.**

Fig 9. Evolution or Revolution.

Darwin may not approve but it's your job to stop the monkey mayhem as Ape Escape 2 debuts on PS2. An arsenal of weaponry should help you avoid all the banana skins on the twenty different levels. Ooh, ooh, go get 'em.

www.apeescape2.com uk.playstation.com

PlayStation.2

THE FRANTIC PLACE THE HILARIOUS PLACE THE THIRD PLACE

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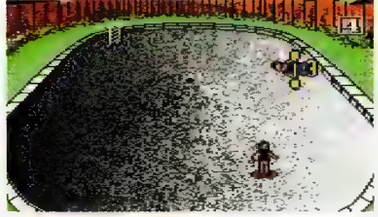
SKATE OR CRY? Ah, the good old days - games were so much better, just like... aargh! What's this?

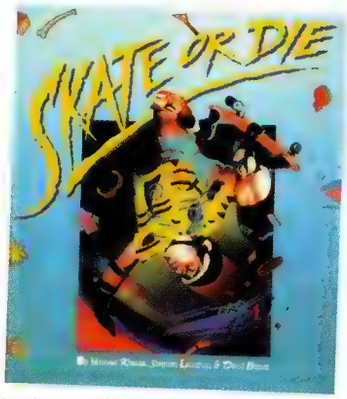


POOL THE OTHER ONE: Now this is more like it - the jousting sections were deceptively competitive.

›PSM2 DEVELOPER NEWS 7/1/02

BETTER SKATE THAN NEVER

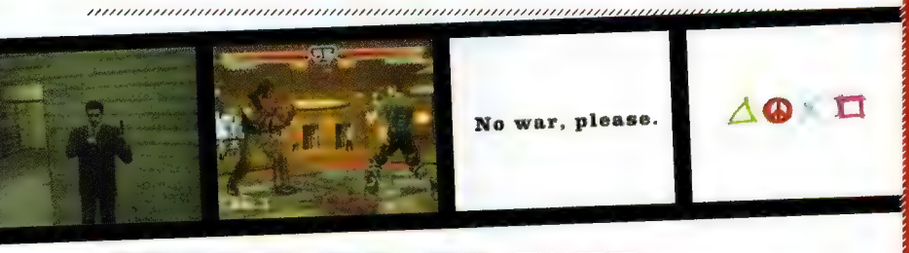
EA resurrect cherished 15-year-old franchise with help from PSM2.



Remember *Skate or Die*? It was probably the first decent skateboarding game, well, ever released on the PC in 1987, before subsequent conversion to the 8-bit Commodore 64. Sadly, apart from the bit where you skated around a concrete bowl waving a pugil stick, the game was awful, but – significantly – the first title to come out of EA's in-house studios, featuring music from crusty legend Rob Hubbard of *Sanxion*, *International Karate* and *Road Rash*, er, fame.

Well, all these years later, EA are tackling the might of *Tony Hawk* with a little help from PSM2. Insanity, eh? We've been roped in to help with development, and stop them repeating the unspeakable tragedy of *Simpsons Skateboarding*. The 8-bit game featured one-on-one street races, half pipe combos and an abysmal country pursuit. We'll be demanding a blatant *THPS4* rip off – controls 'n' all – twinned to a proper career mode – where you start off trundling outside your local Spar – with focused *SSX*-style racing and unparalleled customisation options. No problems there then, eh?

PSM2 RECKONS *If EA BIG throw proper money and talent behind it – and actually listen to us – this could be a winner. There should be no problem supplying the licensed music, skaters and companies a good skating game requires. Dan D didn't spend seven years throwing himself down steps – occasionally with a skateboard – to let this one fizzle out. More details, soon.*



›PSM2 RUMOURS 7/1/02

SONY GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

Mysterious anti-war ad cuddles liberal gamers.

Cynical marketing stunt or benevolent gesture? During mid February, Sony allegedly leaked an anti-war message onto the Internet, where characters from key games like *The Getaway* and *Vice City* symbolically put away their weapons, culminating in the message 'No war, please' and a picture of all the PlayStation symbols with a little CND sign in the circle. Awww.

When we approached Sony, they politely declined to comment, suggesting the matter had caused much internal debate. Unperturbed, we probed our internal spies who hinted that the advert had been made by someone else, but Sony had decided to let it go as a form of unintentional 'viral marketing'. Internet reaction was polarised between love and hate, with one chap going so far as to suggest that, "You wouldn't see that from Bill Gates". Crikey.

PSM2 RECKONS *Sure, it could be a cynical attempt to reverse videogaming's violent image and reinforce Sony's caring sharing credentials, but either way, the advert works a treat. The subtle fusion of in-game footage and plonky guitars really tugged at out heart strings. Come on cynics, let's at least pretend a big company cares. Hmmm?*

PSM2 AWARDS 2002

Your chance to vote in the most important PlayStation 2 awards since, well, last year's.

Ah, magnifique. Spring has sprung, pollen tickles the air and sunlight tip-toes across the leafy treetops. What better time to cast our minds back to the bleak mid-winter of 2002? Yes, the whimsical wheel of time has turned, and once again PSM2 is giving you the chance to vote in the most prestigious awards this side of a tear-soaked acceptance speech. Provided you, erm, exclude the Oscars, BAFTAs, MOBOs, Emmys, MTV Awards, Grammys, Tonys and Brits. But we're definitely better than the Golden Globes. Particularly if Jonnie splashes out on that nice Californian red on offer in the Co-Op. Well, anyway...

Last year's PSM2 awards were phenomenally popular, with literally thousands of entries willing *GTA3* to inevitable victory. This year we're confidently expecting a similar response for *Vice City* but, hey, be original. What about the delights of *Ico*, *Gitaroo Man* or *Kingdom Hearts*? The categories are clearly listed below, so stick on your thinking caps – yes, a damp tea towel hastily folded into a kaftan will do, if you will – and send your nominations to: PSM2 Awards 2002, PSM2 Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Future Publishing, Bath, BA1 2BW. We'll be running the entry form for a couple of months and printing the results in, ooh, PSM2#36.

ENTRY FORM

MY TOP FIVE PS2 GAMES OF 2002, IN ORDER, ARE:

1 .....
2 .....
3 .....
4 .....
5 .....

BEST PS2 GAME DEVELOPER OF 2002 IS:

.....

BEST PS2 GAME PUBLISHER OF 2002 IS:

.....

BEST PS2 GAME CHARACTER OF 2002 IS:

.....

BEST CG (INTRO/ENDING/CUT SCENES) OF 2002 IS:

.....

BEST GAME MUSIC OF 2002 IS:

.....

DEFINING MOMENT OF 2002 IS:

.....

BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT OF 2002 IS:

.....

Name ..... Age .....

Address .....

.....

..... Postcode .....

BEST VIEW!

JOHNNY VEGAS: With exact recreations of New York and Paris there, you'd be a fool to visit the real things. No, really...

>PUBLISHER NEWS ナハラヌ

VIVA THQ

They're not all *WWE* and *Red Faction* y'know.

They may be famous for men in pants and geo-modding FPSs but there's a lot more to THQ. And we're not talking about *Spongebob Squarepants* either...

Most publishers, when faced with a slew of brand new titles with which to introduce to the world, will wait until the annual brain and bowel blowout that is E3 – the biggest game show in the world held once a year in LA. Not so THQ. They're so excited by their upcoming games that – for the second year running – they took us to the relaxed and tranquil surroundings of Las Vegas so that we could give them our undivided attention (cough).

We've picked the best highlights and have dotted them around these pages. Suffice to say that when you add such stalwarts as *Smackdown! 5* and *Red Faction 3* (both coming later this year) they've got all the bases covered. The rumoured (and expected) *Daredevil* game failed to show, to our disappointment, but a rendered teaser trailer for *The Punisher* was indeed teasing, though revealed little beyond the game's adult content. Lots more as soon as we hear about it.

EVIL DEAD: A FISTFUL OF BOOMSTICK

Trapped in time. Surrounded by Evil. Low on gas...

The last *Evil Dead* game was indeed evil. And is now thankfully dead. This second game (and THQ are eager that all memories of the first be erased) is by new developers, looks totally different, and, is, ulp, looking pretty good.

It's being coded by VIS Interactive, whose last game was *State of Emergency*, and, from a micro-glance at *Boomstick*, you can tell that the two have a lot in common. There's the 'hundreds of characters on screen at once' trick. The multiple, pick-upable weapons. And, of course, a whole Trevi Fountain of blood and guts just waiting to be unleashed from undead bodies.

The graphics are much more detailed than *SOE*'s cartoony goons (think *Resident Evil*) and, lending a unique air of *Dead*ness to the project, they've naturally got Bruce Campbell to provide the voice of hero Ash. The Evil Dead movies may be a distant memory but their cool just wont die.

MOST GORE!

BARBEQUED SPARE GIBS: When the zombie horde's penetrated, its members release a torrent of gore.

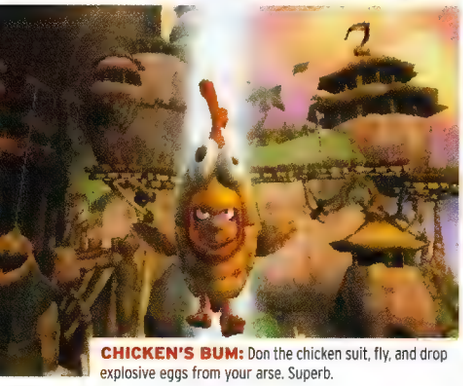
SHOTGUN WEDDING: Armed with a shotgun and chainsaw mini Bruce Campbell (as hero Ash) has all the firepower he needs.

BEST PANTS!

RHINO KNEEL: Mount your jungle chums (such as this rhino) and have them do your evil Juju bidding.

TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU

More men in pants...



CHICKEN'S BUM: Don the chicken suit, fly, and drop explosive eggs from your arse. Superb.

Look at him! A little voodoo priest in his keks! Brilliant! Yes, it's easy to be sceptical about yet *another* platform hero, but at least Tak (and his, ahem, Juju) are trying reeaally hard to do something different.

For a start it's the first ever platform game designed for use as a cartoon and movie rather than the other way round (pending the success of the game, of course). And the integration of animals and items into the puzzles make Tak rather more inventive than most. For instance, an Ape plucking bananas from a tree turns said tree momentarily into an excellent catapult with which to enter the next area. But of course. Path barred by a troublesome Monkey? Why not enrage the Ram sufficiently so that he butts into the Monkey's tree and knocks the pest out? Etc.

Chuck in lots of spooky magic powers (administered via your 'spirit rattle') as rewards for completing tasks and you've got a game that – while clearly designed to dominate the brains of children – may well appeal to gamers in long trousers, too.

TAKKIN' THE MICKEY: The stars of Tak will raise a smile for even the most cynical of gamers.

ALTER ECHO

MOST ORIGINAL!

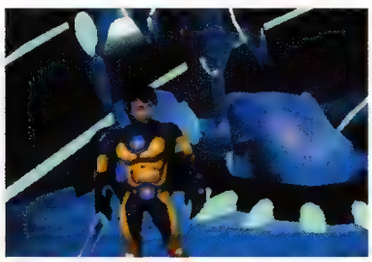
Prepare for some mighty morphing.

It was back at E3 2002 when we first saw this explore-em-up in action. Your character, Nevin, can morph between three unique forms: in Melee mode he's a Ninja-style warrior, armed with short-range sword-based weapons. In Gun mode, he's a huge stomping robot, firing missiles and lasers. And in Stealth mode he's a man-sized gekko (honestly), able to climb walls and sneak invisibly past enemies.

It was a nice idea, but it's come on so much more since then. For a start the game looks like no other. Bright, colourful, alien textures and colours team with warped walkways and battle arenas making the perfect playground for your three abilities.

It's now possible to chain together morphs and moves too, biffing an opponent into the air in Melee mode before morphing into Gun mode and blasting them further aloft with a juggling volley of gunfire. And finally a new *Matrix*-like 'time dilation' effect lets you freeze time and key in special moves in a Bemani style. At the end you set about your enemy reigning down a combo of attacks while they wheel around completely helpless. The longer you can go in the Bemani game without putting a button press wrong, the more dramatic your attack. Impressive.

"BRIGHT, COLOURFUL, ALIEN TEXTURES"



NEVIN THE TEENAGER: Your character morphs between three different guises, each with their own skills.

BEST RACER!

ITALIAN GALLEON: We're not too sure about the quiff, but the exploding pirate ship is most welcome.

SPLASHDOWN 2

It's – quite literally – wet and wild.

Remember *Splashdown*? A game promoted by a pair of page three lovelies freezing their 'charms' off in a pond, within the pages of this very magazine? Well they've made it much, much better.

Say hello to the 'cinematic racer', a new type of racing game where bizarre things happen as you race by. Parts of the tracks collapse, changing the race from lap to lap. A huge pirate ship opens fire, forcing you to detour. And huge tidal waves sweep you up and on to previously inaccessible water slides. In a genre traditionally based on staring at a single square centimetre of the screen, being harassed from all sides as the tracks mutate and new pathways open up *mid-race* is certainly a new experience.

Plus they're boasting 'the most realistic water in a videogame' and while that's quite a claim, we have to agree that they've nailed it. Dive your Seadoo beneath the waves to propel you upwards for jumps, ride waves for extra speed and use whatever scenery you can to grind past obstacles and cut corners.

WARHAMMER 40,000: FIRE WARRIOR

BEST FPS!

Because the year 30,000 is so passé.

Lead is deadly, children. And making little model soldiers out of it, painting them, then having pretend 'wars' on the kitchen table is even worse. Thank heavens, then, for *Fire Warrior*, a PS2 FPS based on Games Workshop's (20-sided) dice roller.

It's the 41st millennium. Already. The universe has been at war for aeons. Humanity has developed into the evil Imperium, with the Tau being just one of four races fighting for their lives. You play the part of Tau warrior Kais through a single 24-hour period in the endless war.

Developed by the UK's Kuju (a company famous for games with 'Fire' in the title) it looks as sharp and edgy as that old favourite *TimeSplitters 2*, though with the added bonuses of more gore, and lack of 'comedy' characters. And – result – there's even talk of an online multiplayer mode.

The Warhammer theme guarantees it a huge audience, and the game's shaping up to bring 40K to life in fine style.

"IT LOOKS AS SHARP AND EDGY AS TS2"

TANKS A BUNCH: Shoot the crap out of three unique, tooled up, war-obsessed future races.

RUMBLE IN THE JUMBLE

Two ears. Eight press releases. One winner. Which game will Jonnie deem worthy to leak its PR juices over PSM2's jammy news tray?

It's the same every month. An avalanche of games bundle into the office at the last minute, and we haven't got space to fit them all in. As we sit on the phone carefully explaining to our chums in PR that space is tight, we're usually thinking one of three things: 1) The game sounds shit. 2) The game sounds boring. 3) The game sounds brilliant but the screenshots are shit. This month, everything changes. Rather than pick a game at random, or bore you to death with a series of concept sketches, we're deciding this the only way we know how – with a bloody fight to the death.

Naturally, since games can't actually fight, or indeed move, let alone bleed or, for that matter, die, we've arranged an independent means of assessment – Jonnie's charcoal-brittle patience. That's right, we read him a series of press releases, and see how long we can keep droning on before he starts swearing and begs us to stop. Simple, no?

To keep things fair, we'll put this month's games in a hat, and play them off against each other in vintage tournament style – quarters, semis and final. Actually, to keep things exciting, the rules on the right explain how we'll proceed.

RULES

Quarter finals: We read Jonnie two game names, and depending on which sounds less tedious, he chooses a winner.

Semi Finals: We show Jonnie two screenshots, and depending which looks more interesting, he chooses a winner.

Final: We read Jonnie two press releases, and depending which sounds most exciting, he chooses the ultimate winner.

The game which proves to be the least boring, gets its press release printed in full*.
Let battle commence!

*No, not really, that'd be boring.

"WE'RE DECIDING THIS WITH A BLOODY FIGHT TO THE DEATH"

QUARTER FINAL - NAMES

PRO BEACH SOCCER vs **BULLET PROOF MONK**

Publisher: Wanadoo
Release: May 2003

Publisher: Empire Interactive
Release: Christmas 2003

Jonnie's Comments: "*Monk*, obviously." It is worth noting that Jonnie is rubbish at football, and in about ten years' time, might have hair befitting a monastery.

QUARTER FINAL - NAMES

BAD BOYS 2 vs **RAGING BLADES**

Publisher: Empire Interactive
Release: Late 2003

Publisher: Wanadoo
Release: April 2003

Jonnie's Comments: "What happened to *Bad Boys 1*? [somebody points out that it was a film starring Will Smith and... Go on ... Martin Lawrence] Oh, *Raging Blades*, then. Definitely."

QUARTER FINAL - NAMES

SPHINX vs **FROGGER BEYOND**

Publisher: THQ
Release: Autumn 2003

Publisher: Konami
Release: 28th February 2003

Jonnie's Comments: "*Sphinx*? What's it up against? *Frogger Beyond*? Ha ha ha ha ha. Sorry. Ha ha ha ha ha ha."

QUARTER FINAL - NAMES

ONE MUST FALL BATTLEGROUNDS vs **XGRA**

Publisher: TBC
Release: TBC

Publisher: Acclaim
Release: Autumn 2003

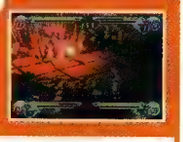
Jonnie's Comments: "*X-Grav* sounds brilliant. [We point out that the game is pronounced '*XGRA*', like ex-grar] Yes, *X-Grav* sounds brilliant."

SEMI FINAL - SCREENSHOTS

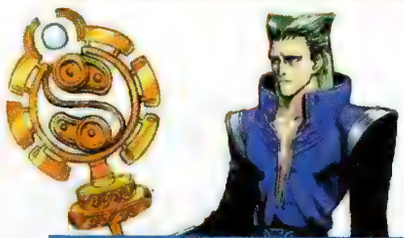
BULLET PROOF MONK vs **RAGING BLADES**

Publisher: Empire Interactive
Release: Christmas 2003

Publisher: Wanadoo
Release: April 2003



Jonnie's Comments: "What screenshot have you got for *BulletProof Monk*, then? A logo? That's all? Oh, bloody hell. Default victory for *Raging Blades*. But I'm not happy about it."



SEMI FINAL - SCREENSHOTS

SPHINX vs **XGRA**

Publisher: THQ
Release: Autumn 2003

Publisher: Acclaim
Release: Autumn 2003

Jonnie's Comments: "Look at that laser, it's cutting the floor and everything. No wait, that pyramid looks brilliant. Pyramid? Laser? Arrgh. This isn't fair. [No Jonnie, but neither is life] Laser, then."

FINAL - PRESS RELEASE

RAGING BLADES

Publisher: Wanadoo
Release: April 2003

"Are you ready to fight against an evil god and seven dark races from hell? In the role of..."

vs

XGRA

Publisher: Acclaim
Release: Autumn 2003

"After the F1 Nosediving disaster of 2025, the Extreme Gravity Racing Association, or XGRA..."

Survival time (XGRA): Almost a minute.
Survival time (Raging Blades): Four or five seconds.

Jonnie's Comments: "I can't believe *Raging Blades* got here by default. [Er, you *did* choose it, Jonnie]. Let's hear the press release then. Am I ready to fight against an evil god and seven dark races from hell? No, I am not. Iria the Valkyrie? Oh, this is terrible. *XGRA* please." [Hang on, let's read it first, eh?]

WINNER XGRA

XGRA, XGRA, READ ALL ABOUT IT: Yes, it's *Extreme G Racing* with destructible scenery.

LASER OF TWO EVILS: Realtime commentary, new weapons, dynamic weather... ooh, shiny...

RESULT!

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TOMB RAI

"WHEN YOU'RE SOMERSAULTING WITH GUNS BLAZING, THE RENEWED SENSE OF

TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS

"NO SHIT"

DER

ADVENTURE IS OVERPOWERING"

This is it. The 'adult' *Tomb Raider* the world's been waiting for. We're the only ones who've played it – and now you're the first to know how good it really is...

ON THE RUN: Jonnie Bryant

Hey, let's go mad. Let's throw caution to the wind and forget the clichéd intro; the reams of complex backstory and polygon history of Lara Croft (she's made up of 5000 this time, by the way – ten times as many as in earlier games). Instead, let's turn everything on its head and give you the PSM2 verdict of *Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness* right here, up at the front.

When we said on the cover that it's a shocker, we weren't exaggerating. Great Christ, up until now we've been justifiably sceptical about Lara's first PS2 game – the initial *Metal Gear Solid 2*-lite screenshots, lack of playable code and persistent delays didn't entice us to embrace *Angel of Darkness* with warm arms. It's been hard to maintain an open mind at times – and that's why we've been so surprised at this late stage.

The Angel of Darkness is very, *very* good. No shit. And the finished game has the potential to be absolutely stunning. Despite the control system throwing wobblies at times (more on that later) and the enemy AI not being fully functioning, we're already impressed by how solid and sure-footed the code is.

This isn't blind praise based on a handful of screenshots (see certain other publications for that). PSM2 is the only magazine which has sat down and played through the whole game. Hell,

"THE FINISHED GAME HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE ABSOLUTELY STUNNING"

we've even seen the ending – twice. We've played it on a portable TV, we've just experienced it in the full surround-sound lunacy of developer Core Design's demo room. And we've come away from Core with boosted faith in the future of PS2. Not many games can do that.

First impressions? Excuse us while we drain the contents of our brains into the next paragraph. We've just put the DualShock 2 down, and the information overload's giving us a headache.

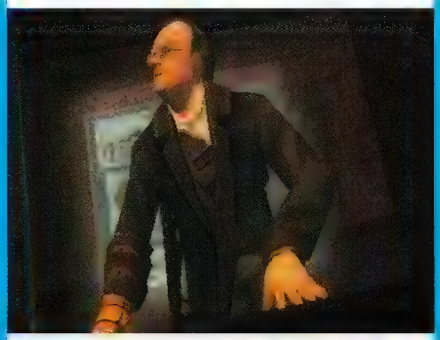
Lara's new moves list - it's bigger than you can imagine (Note to self: grow extra thumbs). So incredibly hi-res. Look at that litter floating in the sewers! Supreme water effects – bit of clipping there at the moment, but it's never looked so good. So we don't play new guy Kurtis that much? *Interesting*. Nnnggg, those controls need sorting – face forwards dammit, *FORWARDS*. Shit – look at all those puzzles down there. Shoot the baboon-thing. *Shoot the baboon-thing*. Ooh, touch of slowdown there. (Note to Core: sort slowdown. Thanks.) Handy audio prompts. That music – it's pure bloody Star bloody Wars. Those sound effects (hear that water dripping?). The sound engineer? Videogame's John Williams, surely? Christ – he's locked the door. Run, run, *run*.

Right. *Better*. Let's cut to the important stuff. First up, when's it coming out? We have it in writing – 12 point Helvetica on white A4 – that ▶

MICRO PLOT

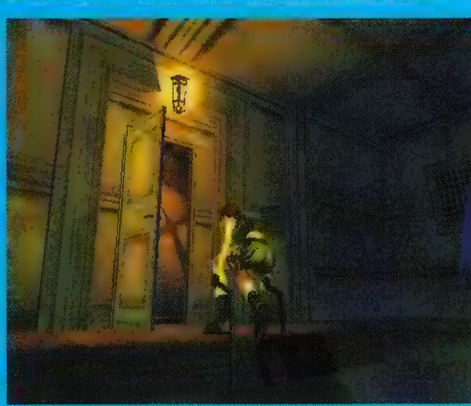
Some old faces return in *The Angel of Darkness* – but there are a bundle of sinister new ones. Here, we introduce you to some of the main players, along with their relevance to the plot (the abridged version, mind)...

JOACHIM KAREL: He's the head of the Cabals guard who are out to bring the Nephilim to Earth.



ECKHARDT: Kurtis wants to kill this arch villain but he needs the third Periapt shard to create an invincible dagger.

MARGOT CARVIER: She's a friend of Von Croy's and has his diary which contains leads to the fourth Obscura painting.



COVER GAME

PSM2 TAKES APART A PREMIER PLAYSTATION 2 TITLE FOR YOUR EXCLUSIVE PLEASURE...

THERE ARE PLACES I DISMEMBER...

We knew that the action takes place first in Paris and then in Prague. What we weren't ready for was the size of the levels you'll find in each location. As we've already mentioned, the game starts with you on the run from the law in the streets of the French capital, but it isn't long before you're traversing an almost life-size version of the Louvre, scrambling through layer after layer of an archaeological dig site and exploring the many zones of the Cabal's Strahov HQ. And all this *after* Core decided to chop the game in half...

TRANS EUROPA DISTRESS

PARIS

Ah, gay Paris. Where the cafés conceal scowling members of the Lux Veritatis and the streets are filled with Gendarmes wielding blunderbusses. Here Lara gets to implement her escape after the death of Von Croy, where she meets up with Kurtis for the first time and then infiltrates the Louvre in search of an engraving depicting the location of the Obscuras.

Von Croy's apartment features more than once in the game's proceedings. Initially it's the place where Lara's framed for his murder, but she returns later for a boss battle with a super tough assassin who's hiding out there. Ultimately, though, her return to Paris is in order to explore the absolutely massive Dig Site level.

PRAGUE

Eckhardt's trail then leads back to the Czech Republic where the headquarters of the sinister Cabal is located. The Strahov Complex is a huge, sprawling building which is located somewhere in the city, and contains within it the Bio Dome, Aquatic Research Area and Sanatorium levels.

THE LEVELS THEMSELVES

PARIS STREETS

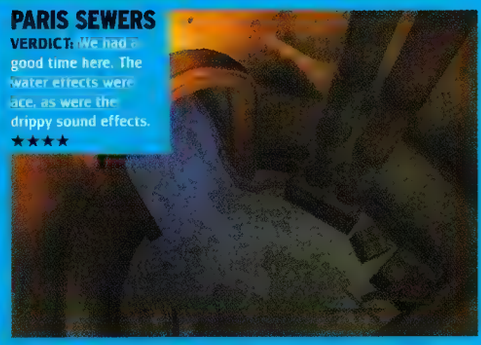
VERDICT: A good intro to the platforming but the stealth camera needed sorting out.

★★★

PARIS SEWERS

VERDICT: We had a good time here. The water effects were ace, as were the drippy sound effects.

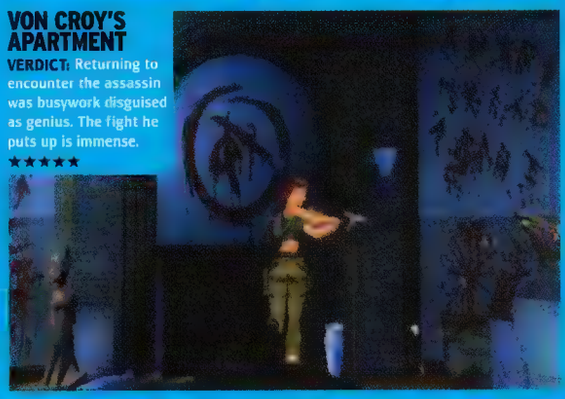
★★★★



VON CROY'S APARTMENT

VERDICT: Returning to encounter the assassin was busywork disguised as genius. The fight he puts up is immense.

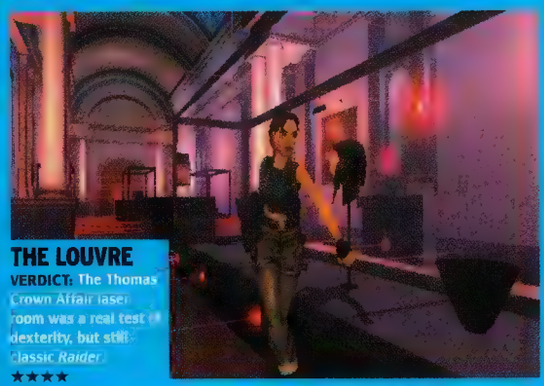
★★★★★



THE LOUVRE

VERDICT: The Thomas Crown Affair laser room was a real test of dexterity, but still classic *Raider*.

★★★★



THE HANGER

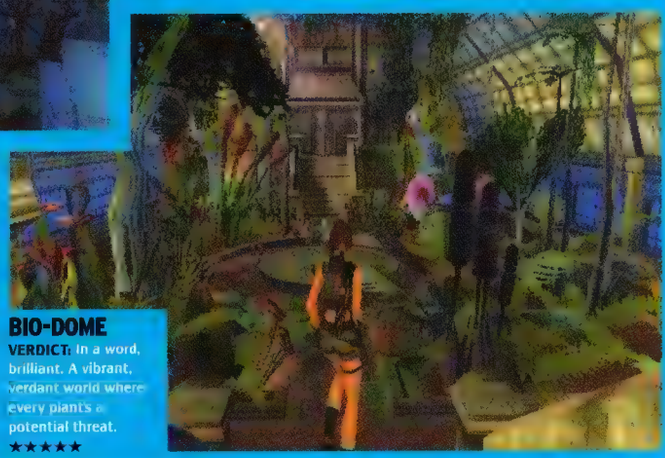
VERDICT: The size of [illegible] at the tension was leeched out of it due to unfinished guard AI.

★★★

BIO-DOME

VERDICT: In a word, brilliant. A vibrant, verdant world where every plant's a potential threat.

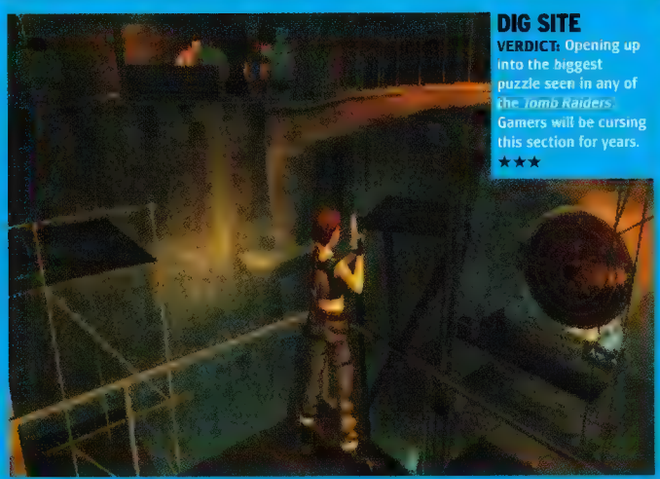
★★★★★



DIG SITE

VERDICT: Opening up into the biggest puzzle seen in any of the *Tomb Raiders*. Gamers will be cursing this section for years.

★★★



SANATORIUM

VERDICT: Gunning down zombies as Kurtis was a treat but the lack of a finished Chirugai tarnished the moment.

★★★

TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS

KILLING ME CROFTLY

For the most-part, Lara's the victim of the same rag-doll death mechanics that the guards are prone to. If she gets killed as a result of them shooting her, her body simply collapses depending on the last area of impact. But guns are only one slice of the overall *Angel of Darkness* death pie. Floors that suddenly disintegrate beneath you, spiked pit traps, electrified fences and the ever-present threat of drowning... All lethal and all requiring a personalised death animation.

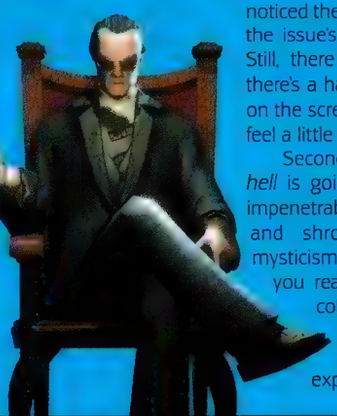
VERT-I-GO AGAIN: The camera proves a bugbear at points (doesn't it always in action adventures?). Here, it just made us dizzy.

▶it'll be out in time for 'Q4 of Eidos' financial year' – April, May or June, basically. Looking at the current state of the code, which *still* needs to be stitched together into a fully coherent start-to-finish game, we'd put our money on a later rather than earlier release.

The reason for the delays? We put that point straight to the man at the top, Core's MD Jeremy Heath-Smith, as we bundled through his office looking for the toilet. And it seems it's all down to framerate – how smooth they need the finished game to be. "It now runs at a constant 60 frames per second, which is a rarity on PlayStation 2," explained Jeremy. "We'd been chasing 60 frames from day one. We put this line in the sand saying we'd have it 60fps throughout and the problem with this is that when it does drop frames you don't get the barely noticeable slowdown of *Vice City* – you get fucking *slow motion*. So you can't get away with it.

"We even had the Sony technicians up here. We've got their kit up here now, but we don't need it any more – we're just going to do a final check on it. We've just been smart, and we've done it. People keep asking why it's been delayed and that's why. It's a massive factor." We'd already

"SECOND IMPORTANT THING: WHAT THE STEAMING *HELL* IS GOING ON WITH THAT STORY?"



noticed the odd period of slow-mo, so it looks like the issue's not been completely addressed yet. Still, there isn't much time to think about it – there's a hard-as-nails assassin trying to kill Lara on the screen in front of us, and we're starting to feel a little stressed...

Second important thing: what the steaming *hell* is going on with that story? The plot's as impenetrable as lovely Jade Goody's brain jungle, and shrouded in shoe-gazingly contrived mysticism – read between the lines though, and you realise it just means you'll be asked to collect ancient item A from catacomb B.

While the story's not important to the actual minute-by-minute playing experience, it naturally has significant impact on the direction the game follows – on who you play and the subtle twists towards the end of the adventure. Which is why we need to outline it here. Briefly. In a way even we can understand and care about. Need the detail? See issue #32, where Dan D went info-nuts...

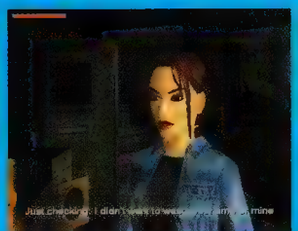
OK. Lara's former mentor Werner Von Croy (yes, he who left her for dead in Egypt at the end of *Tomb Raider Chronicles*) has been asked by sinister stranger Eckhardt to find one of the five Obscura paintings. After receiving a call from Von Croy, Lara meets him in Paris only to argue with him, black out and wake up with his blood on her hands. Accused of murder and on the run, she tracks down Von Croy's diary, meets up with new bloke Kurtis Trent who's also after the Big E, and they track him to Prague. We discover that Eckhardt, leading a group of alchemists collectively called The Cabal – is using the Obscura painting powers to reawaken the Nephilim – hybrid descendants of mortals and angels. The only way to stop him is by wielding a dagger made of three Periapt shards. Kurtis has two, but guess who has to find the final piece..?

That really is a superficial look at the story behind *The Angel of Darkness* (trust us, you *don't* want to dig any deeper), but it's worth explaining the Kurtis connection – seeing as you get to play him during the course of the game. In another shock revelation, we've learnt that you ▶

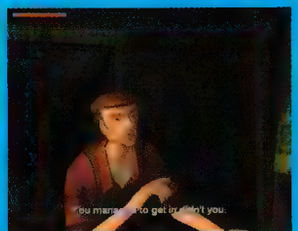
MAD CHATTER

There are two ways in which you can determine the ease of your path through the game. The first is by using the evolution system to open up new entry or exit points in levels. The second is via conversations with NPCs. Depending on your attitude (you choose to be either positive or negative) you'll glean more or less information from them. So, if you want to find another way into the Louvre, it might pay to be civil to the hobo...

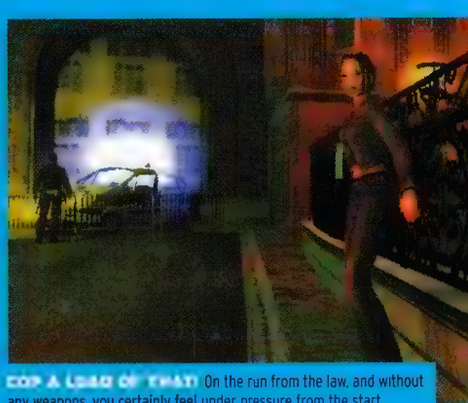
LIP FLICK: The Paris levels are filled to the rafters with people to chat to. You find Rennes here in his pawn shop. How helpful he'll be, though, is anyone's guess.



GET YOUR TAPS OUT: At certain points in some conversations you'll be required to hit different buttons in sequence in a bemani-style. Just to add to the pressure.



FACTS OF STRIFE: The people you're interviewing will tell you different things depending on whether you are consolatory or aggressive. Be nice, folks.



COP A LOAD OF THAT! On the run from the law, and without any weapons, you certainly feel under pressure from the start.

COVER GAME

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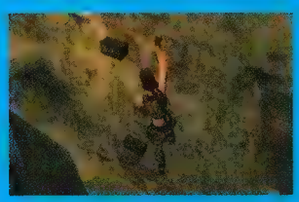
MOVIN' ON HUP

From hopping over obstacles to her all new stealth crawl, Lara has never been this physically flexible before. It's one of the reasons why perfecting the control system's been such a nightmare for Core, but the resulting range of moves are exceptional. It's also a feature that increases the appeal of Kurtis. Not only does he have almost the same move set as Lara, he also has a series of unique combat moves centred around the Chirugai.

GYMNASTICS

Currently tapping L1 – although this may change – allows you to toggle between three of the four movement modes; one for getting around, one for shooting stuff and one beating people up. Here's an overview of the kinds of shapes Lara can make when scrambling about the levels.



VERDICT:
The old moves are solid as long as the controls behave themselves while the new ones add new areas to master. PSM2 favourites from the above include the diagonal hand crossing that come with the free climbing and the return of the swan dive.

★★★★★

STEALTH

Press the L3 button and Lara/Kurtis will enter their fourth movement mode – stealth. This allows them to creep up on guards, perform choke holds and case out areas before they sneak across them. The silent kills basically result in the guards remaining *off* a high alert status, but the motivation behind keeping hidden is great. Get busted in a stealth section and it's straight back to the place you last saved.

VERDICT: Getting busted in stealth mode is a painful experience, but it focuses you no end – especially at the start of the game when you haven't got any weapons at your disposal to help you out. Conversely, the stealth kills really do keep levels quiet when you're low on health or ammo.

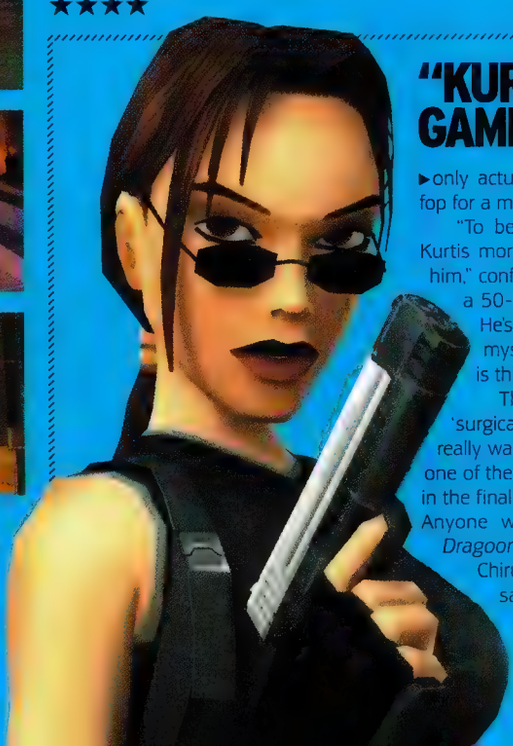
★★★★

COMBAT

We had more than enough opportunity to shoot at things during our play-though and came away with a sick sense of pleasure at how convincing the rag-doll physics were – shoot a guard until he drops and his body will pirouette away from you spraying ketchup as he goes. The inclusion of hand-to-hand, though, takes the biscuit as Lara kicking enemies into submission is a touch of fresh perfection.

VERDICT: Switching between combat modes is initially fumblesome, but seeing Lara pack her guns away and pound the living bejesus out of guards instead really does push you to perfect your skills. Gunwise, the lock-on was a touch over-zealous, perhaps, but Core are correcting that as we speak.

★★★★



"KURTIS PROVIDES THE MUSCLE IN THE GAME, BUT HE HANDLES JUST LIKE LARA"

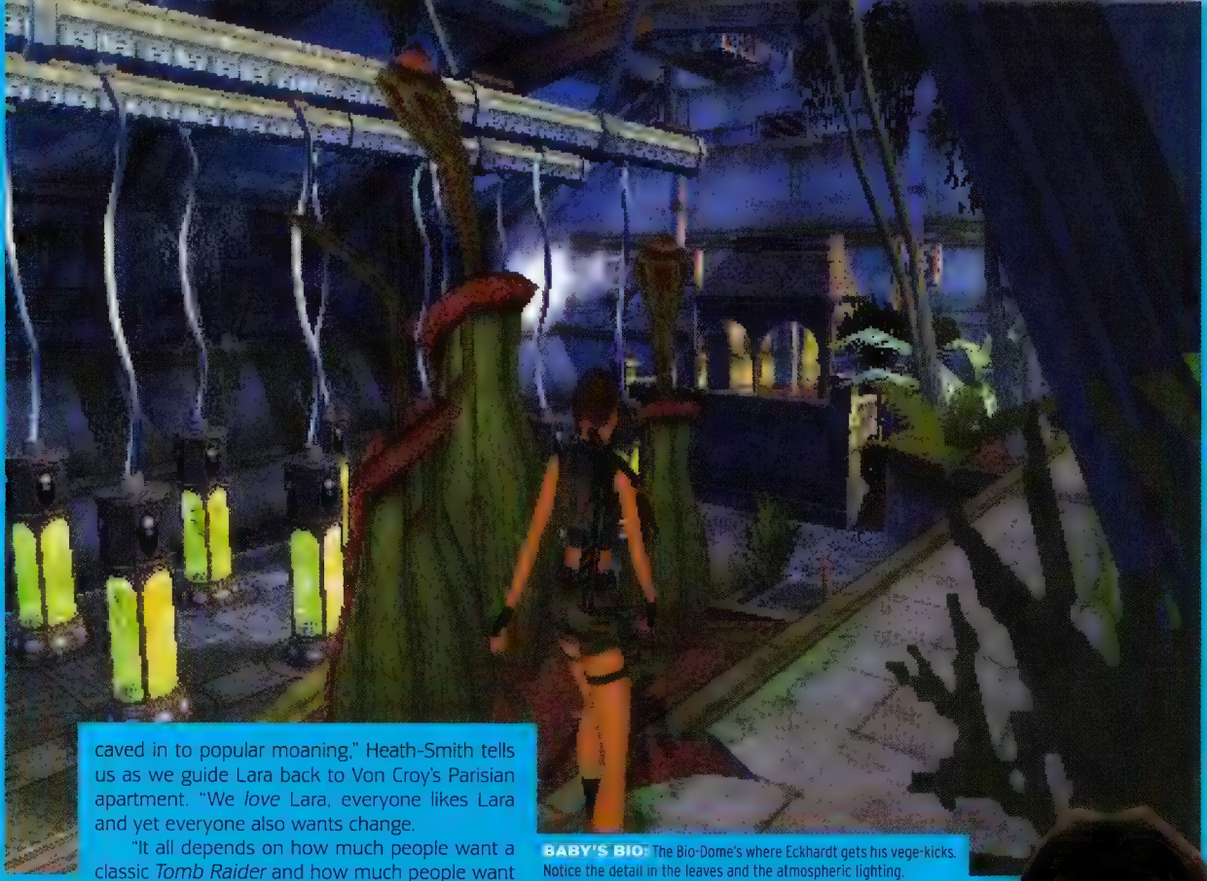
▶only actually play the spinning blade-wielding fop for a maximum of 15% of the total time.

"To be honest with you I wish we'd used Kurtis more, because everyone's really taken to him," confesses Heath-Smith. "I could never see a 50-50 split, but I *can* see a Kurtis game. He's such a cool character and he's got this mystical disc weapon, the Chirugai, which is this killing machine."

The Chirugai (which translates as 'surgical strike', apparently) is one thing we really wanted to get to grips with – but it's also one of the few elements that needs to be added in the final mix. We know how it'll work, though. Anyone who's played *Rez* (or Sega's *Panzer Dragoon*) will be able to settle into hurling the Chirugai like a pro, as it's based on the same multiple lock-on system. You'll make a sweep around the room, highlighting enemies with the push of ⊗ (probably) and then unleashing the spinning disc to do your bidding. There's a psychic connection with your weapon, so expect there to be some kind of 'psychic meter' that drains while the blade's in action (otherwise you'd never go hand-to-hand – or reach for your gun).

Kurtis provides the muscle in the game, but essentially he handles just like Lara. His playable section take place in Prague's Strahov Complex – a monstrous building, honeycombed by layers of tunnels, where he's faced with the results of the Cabal's terrible experiments. Stealth and sick violence both feature heavily here.

Finally then, the most important thing: how does the game feel to play? As you'd expect, it's not unrecognisable as *Tomb Raider* – you'll still need to re-master Lara's running jump and cling move (now enhanced with a 'last chance' grab). But the introduction of the new combat and stealth moves means that it plays very differently to the other games in the series. "There was such a media driven call to change it and I suppose we



BABY'S BIO: The Bio-Dome's where Eckhardt gets his vege-kicks. Notice the detail in the leaves and the atmospheric lighting.

caved in to popular moaning," Heath-Smith tells us as we guide Lara back to Von Croy's Parisian apartment. "We *love* Lara, everyone likes Lara and yet everyone also wants change.

"It all depends on how much people want a classic *Tomb Raider* and how much people want an evolution," he continues. "Look at the *GT* series. The whole game has moved on so much you expect more from it. The balance for us is trying to keep it hard for the hardcore without making it too hard."

This is probably the most difficult area of *The Angel of Darkness* to balance. How tough do you make a game which committed gamers want to devote weekends to, but which the mainstream punter, after seeing the new *Tomb Raider* film, wants to feel immediately at ease with?

One way Core seem to be tackling the problem is through the new evolution/upgrade system. A *Tomb Raider* novice (if there is such a thing) can take the simplest route from start to finish through a level. The more experienced player will clearly want to see *everything* and nail it 100%, so you'll need to power-up Lara in terms of Grip, Breath and Sprint in order to 'unlock' previously unreachable routes.

Then there's the small matter of the puzzles in the game – a test of brainpower and dexterity? You spoil us. The learning curve's more or less flatlining where these are concerned, with those thrown at you at the start (a field of lasers in the Louvre) to those waiting for you in the puzzle-stuffed Dig Site (which we won't spoil for you too much – see Big Score Puzzle box up on the right there for further details) being equally infuriating – and sadistically pleasurable.

"We're at that arguing stage where we've got it all in," reveals Heath-Smith as we spang Ms Croft into one of the Hangar level's walls for the fourth time (for once, the controls *are* at fault). "But, for me," he continues, "I want it easier, whereas the coders, they'd like it to be more hardcore. I'm sure we'll settle somewhere in the middle though."

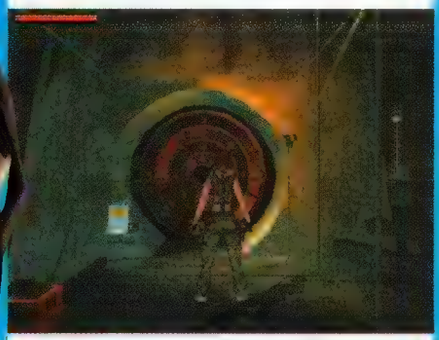
The new stealth sections do add a neat twist – although we feel the camera's a little dicky at times (we didn't think it always selected the best viewpoint when we were trying to make that perfect neck-snapping stealth kill). You're forced into being stealthy at the start of the ▶

"WE LOVE LARA, EVERYONE LIKES LARA AND YET EVERYONE ALSO WANTS CHANGE"

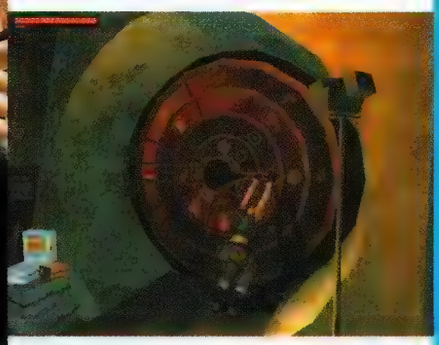
BIG SCORE PUZZLE

Enter the game's Dig Site and you'll find yourself transported straight back to *TR2*. A massive section of this level is based around a huge, multifaceted puzzle that'll take ages to complete. Like the earlier elemental rooms of the series, each chamber off the central hub has a theme. Take the fire room for instance. Here you're forced to run and jump across platforms suspended in a lake of oil that quickly ignites behind you. It's panic play at it's most classic and the kind of thing that's always tested *Raider* fans to their limits.

ROTARY BLUB: The spindle door puzzle requires a spot of free climbing to get to it. Then the fun begins.



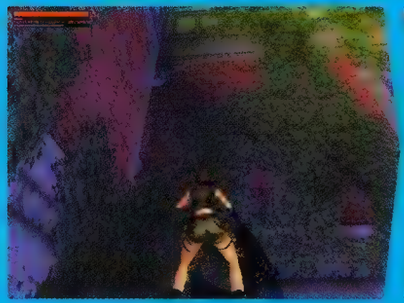
PARKING SIGN: Dear God! Look at all those frickin' symbols. Nothing for it but to try and figure out the combination.



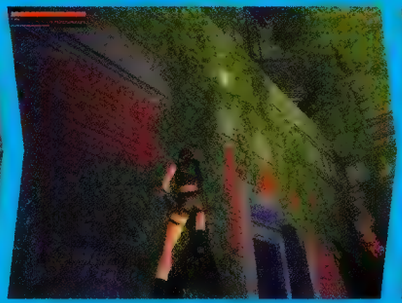
STEER CLASS: Push Lara up against the device using the left analogue stick and she'll get involved with it.

SHOW EVOLUTION

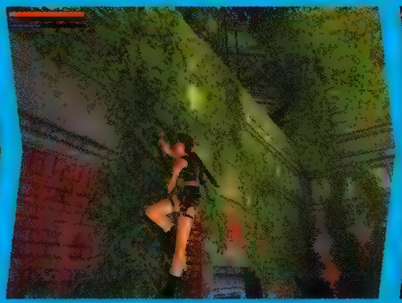
We've seen the evolution system in action and it's potentially the first time a *Tomb Raider* will have some marked reply value. Here's how it works: There are three aspects of Lara's attributes that can be altered using the skill upgrades; grip, breath and sprint. Each can be boosted up to eight times allowing her to sustain all three abilities for longer. So, when faced with a large conservatory in the Bio Dome, we decided that rather than deal with the fiddly platforming across the toxic waters below, we'd simply push the limits of our grip meter and clamber up to a walkway near the ceiling. Multiple routes and reasons to come back for more.



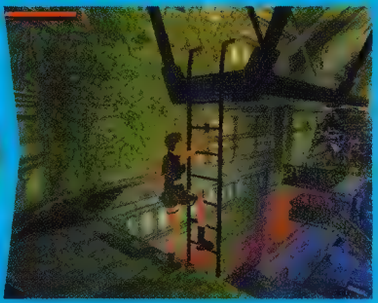
SOLID HOLD: Keep a sharp eye on the thin blue bar in the top left-hand corner of the screen. It's Lara's grip meter.



UP WE GROW: The higher you get, the further it decreases. This is where the power-ups come into play.



HIGHER SHOVE: We've cheated using the debug menu here. Setting her grip quota to five means we can get higher.



SUMMIT STRANGE: Rest at the top and your grip will slowly replenish before you set off on the next section.

COVER GAME

PSM2 TAKES APART A PREMIER PLAYSTATION 2 TITLE FOR YOUR EXCLUSIVE PLEASURE...

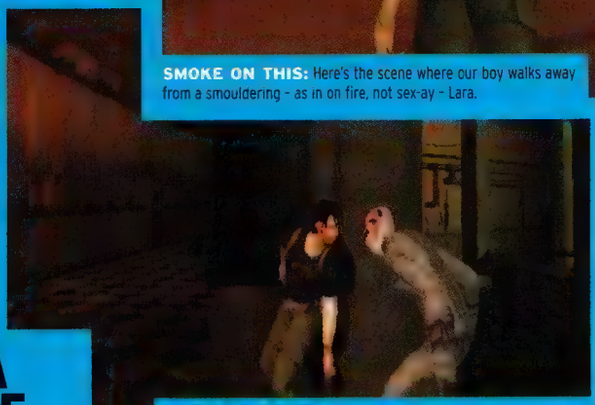
KURTIS MAY WIELD

Seeing just how cool Kurtis is and then getting to play him left us of the opinion that, yep, it would have been a great idea for him to take charge of a larger proportion of the action. At the start he appears just as a presence that's always one step ahead of Lara's investigations – there's a great cutscene where Ms Croft narrowly escapes being burnt to death while old floppy fringe merely flicks his fag into a canal before wandering away. By the time you reach Prague, though, he'll be mixing it up with zombies using either ballistics or the multi-targeting Chirugai.

KNIGHT MARES: Kurtis is the last in a long line of guardians who have kept the immortal Eckhardt under lock and key.

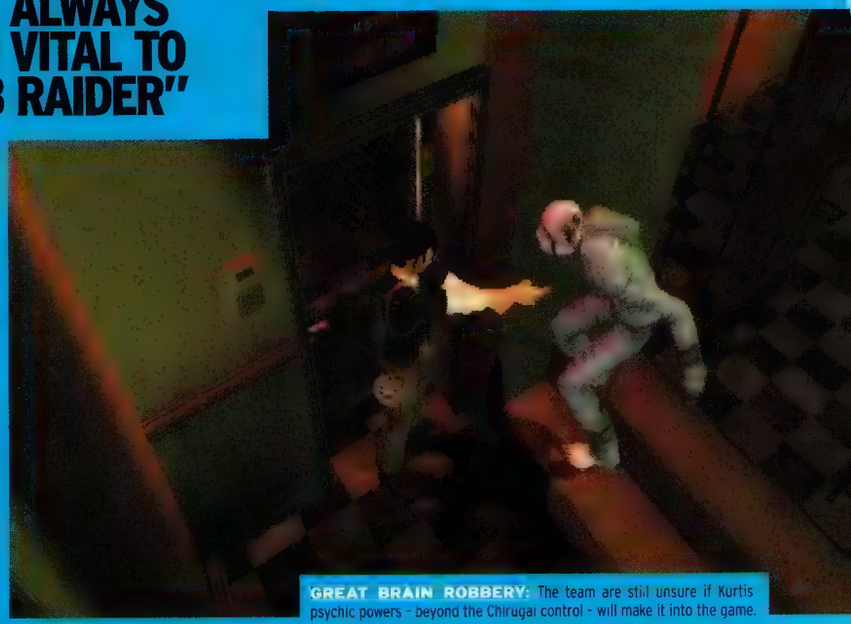
CAFE FEMME: The last time you run into Kurtis is in a Parisian café while you're on the run from the cops.

SMOKE ON THIS: Here's the scene where our boy walks away from a smouldering - as in on fire, not sex-ay - Lara.



SNEAK AND DUELL: He shares pretty much the same moves as Lara and so can switch between combat and stealth.

"SCALE AND A SENSE OF PACE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN VITAL TO TOMB RAIDER"



GREAT BRAIN ROBBERY: The team are still unsure if Kurtis psychic powers - beyond the Chirugai control - will make it into the game.

▶game, when Lara gets attacked by dogs on the streets of Paris. One of the rabid pups tears off her backpack (you're even treated to a cutscene later in the game showing said mutt with girls bag in mouth), and you realise that you'll have to negotiate the early sections without guns. Sneaky. Literally. Later in the game, you'll have the option of going in with twin barrels – and attracting even more enemies to your position – or simply shuffling through the shadows.

With the classic *Tomb Raider* style of puzzle solving and the addition of stealth, are Core worried that this might aggravate today's *GTA* generation? "I am a little bit nervous, because a lot of people expect more pace in games now," Heath-Smith admits. "*Tomb Raider*'s never been that pacey, but I'm not worried about that because it looks so great."

He's not wrong. Shots seen so far don't do the game justice – it's not the brown plodfest it first appears. Admittedly, gushing about the Parisian sewers as you make your way to the Louvre demands a certain level of gritty (shitty?) realism. But even here the team have gone to town. The camera tracks with Lara as she moves through the water, and the refraction effects here are nothing short of stunning, as is the way discarded cans coast across its surface.

It's later in the game when things shift to Prague that the level designers have been given the freedom to be more inventive. Take the Bio-Dome, for instance, a place where Eckhardt plans to raise the Nephilim. "It's like Kew Gardens' main glass house but with Day of the Triffids stuff in there," Heath-Smith points out as we're attempting to nervously swim past some – *are they giant eels?* ("You can come back and kill them later, but for now keep swimming...") The Dome is another focus point for Eckhardt's vivisection experiments. As well as the carniverous plants, you encounter pods containing twisted, unnamed creatures. Greens and purples dominate the colour palette of the Dome and, like The Dig, there's a real sense of scale to the environment.

But scale and a sense of pacing's always been vital to the *Tomb Raider* experience. The way your enter a section is invariably a narrow tunnel which you trundle along and... BLAM you're hit with a level as generous as the Grand Canyon. You constantly have this feeling in *The Angel of Darkness*. You feel as if you're being gently coaxed down a back alley to the next epic set-piece. And, oddly, the development process has reflected this – real life imitating games. It's been one hell of a long path to get to this point, but, hell let's enjoy ourselves while we're here...

Oh yes, almost forgot: and just look at those norks! Eh? EH? Lovely. **PSM2**

Should be out... um... at some point in the... er... future. Possibly April-ish. Possibly.

DVD ACTION

Check back over the trailers we've already run and prepare yourself for a blast of exclusive new footage next disc.

HANDS-ON VERDICT

The controls are bad. Core know the controls are bad and they're struggling to create a system that utilises the DualShock 2's analogue capabilities, while still catering for the vast array of new moves Lara can now perform. A problem comes when you attempt to pull her back from the edge of a platform for a classic running jump. As the analogue sensitivity stands she'll currently execute a q quarter turn rather than the full leap back. It's a broken feature that leads to your left hand straying to the old D-pad in order to inject a sense of familiarity into play. When it does work though, and you're somersaulting away with both guns blazing, the nostalgia, coupled with a renewed sense of adventure is overpowering.

You'll love it because...

You want to be a part of the best action adventure on PS2.

You'll hate it because...

You're under the illusion that the series is stuck in a rut

ORIGINALITY
HANDLING
PRESENTATION

INFO

- **DEVELOPER** Core
- **PUBLISHER** Eidos
- **GAME TYPE** Action adventure

ANTICIPATED FEATURES

- Over four costume styles for Lara.
- Three attack stances: weapons, hand-to-hand and stealth kills.
- Over 500 animations used for Lara alone.

WHERE IT'S AT...

- The controls and guard AI have to be finalised, but everything else is on track for a launch before June. That's just two issues of PSM2 to go...

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PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE
PSM2

COMING SOON

ONLY IN PSM2 - TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES FIRST! プレビュー
トクセンショウホウ

ARE THE MAJORITY OF SEQUELS LITTLE MORE THAN LARGE NUMBER TWOS?

JONNIE

It's a question that been bugging me recently, and one that's kicked up a cloud of possibilities... well four.

1) We've been spoilt. PS2 games, when good, are so much better than anything previously. So our expectations are now outrageously high – yes Sony, we'll take those 120Hz brain implants now!

2) Licences sell, so why be arsed with quality a second time round? There's no getting away from it: *Nightfire* has all the hallmarks of a game rushed out to coincide with the film, while *Agent Under Fire* was actually a better take on Bond.

3) Innovators rarely do the same thing twice. OK, so you've got an exception with Kojima, but look at Mikame. Wowed us all with *DMC* and then left the sequel for an ex-journalist to helm. We can write about 'em but you'd be a fool to ask us to create one – see 120Hz brain implants above.

4) Um, well four's where it all breaks down as we realise that a lot of PS2 sequels *have* improved on the original; *Tony Hawk's 4, GTA: Vice City* and now *Dark Chronicle*... Project this into a world of film and you're looking at an unprecedented run of *Aliens* rather than a steaming pile of *MIB2s*. Sometimes *two* is the magic number... **PSM2**

PSM2'S MANIFESTO

PSM2'S PREVIEWS ARE: Packed with the best shots taken from the most exciting PlayStation 2 games currently in development. They give you all the crucial details you demand and direct you towards the key features of the game which we think will make a difference. We'll also bring you our hands-on verdict for every new game – giving you unrivalled insight into how the game's really shaping up (there's no press release-style waffle here...)

PSM2'S PREVIEWS AREN'T: Simply dull, badly written back-story summaries for third-rate titles you really don't need to know about.

EXPECTED UK JUNE

DARK CHRONICLE

It's an RPG for golf lovers. No, it's an arcade slash-em-up for wannabe inventors. No, it's a... it's a... it's a little bit of life slapped on to a disc.

PICTURE THIS: a world where all games drive to work. ***Swing Away Golf*** **rushes out of its door, toast crumbs all around the edges of its DVD case, jumps into a jalopy and hammers off. At the same time** ***Fatal Frame, Kingdom Hearts*** **and the original** ***Dark Cloud*** **all make a similar break for the open road. Foggy conditions, crossroads on the brow of a hill, then suddenly... eeeeeeeee-kadoomph! You'd think that such a violent meld of game concepts would result in a hellish, razor-edged thing that'd chew up your disc tray. But no.** ***Dark Chronicle*** **steps from the wreckage more brilliant and beautiful than** ***Dark Cloud*** **before it – and that's saying something for a game that originally racked up an impressive 81% right here.**

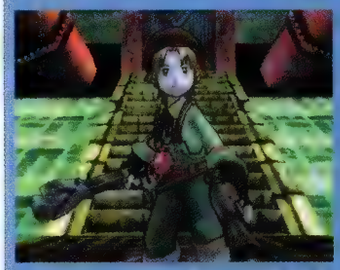
So, what's the secret of this premature success? Level 5 have managed to pull off that rarest of balancing acts when it comes to this game. Not only have they created the impression of everything having changed, they've also retained enough of the original to make fans of the first game feel right at home.

Familiar territory first. Like Sony's first dungeon exploring/village building 'Georama' RPG the game still has multiple characters that you can swap between as you earn control of them – although, interestingly, there only appears to be two this time rather than the original six. Then you've got the weapons upgrade system that sees you winning different elements that can then be plugged into your

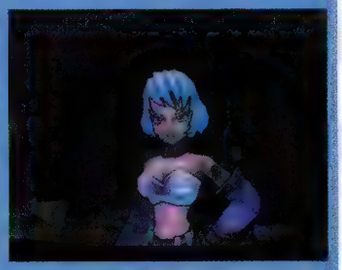
"DARK CHRONICLE IS MORE BRILLIANT AND BEAUTIFUL THAN DARK CLOUD"

STICK OF IT ALL

1



TOOL HAND LOOK:



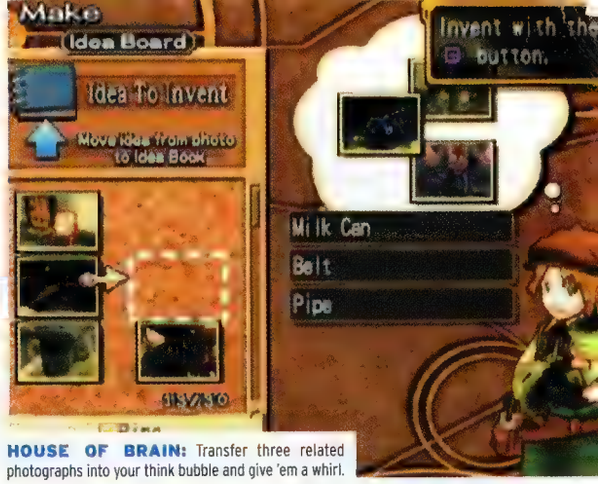
HIRING SQUAD:

CHOOSE WITH CARE:

GNOME IMPROVEMENTS:

LAD INVENTOR

2 Armed only with a camera and his brain, Max is able to rustle up some great little additions to his inventory. But first he has to read anything and everything he can lay his hands on in the town of Palmbrinks for that vital spark of inspiration.



HOUSE OF BRAIN: Transfer three related photographs into your think bubble and give 'em a whirl.

SNAPPY SHOPPER: Head over to the local supply store, pick up the raw materials and start building.

BAD FOR IT: While Max has an evil clown after him, Monica faces more traditional creatures.

TEXT AND THE CITY: The energy pack is the first invention that Max learns about from literature scattered about town.

POWER DANGERS: Each invention opens up something new. The energy pack allows you to charge up your first Ridepod.

chosen beat stick – much like the materia of *Final Fantasy 7*. It's a mechanism that's received some extra depth with the addition of the Spectrumize feature (see Stick Of It All) but, ultimately, it still boils down to nurturing weapons up to a 'level 5' status, and then transplanting their stats into the next largest chopper.

One of the major criticisms of the original 2001 game was the repetitive nature of the dungeons. Despite the randomised layouts – ensuring that you never entered the same location twice – you inevitably faced one 15 level run of battles after another. The bad news is that they're back, but now at least, they're broken up with mid-level boss scraps and some neat new flourishes to how you fight – more on those later.

Other areas where everything gets all touchy and familiar include scenic transitions from night to day (still no weather, though), the return of regular items like antidotes, bread and fish bait, as well as a few familiar faces on the monster front – anyone who learned to hate *Dark Cloud's* Mimics are going to loathe their poisonous, tricksy antics now... Newness, though. So much newness.

To start with, everything's set quite some time after Toran, Xiao, Goro and all the other fantasy-styled characters from the first game have passed away. As a result, you're looking at a very steampunk-styled world where you'll find trains, retro cars and mini mechs round every corner. It's this advance in technology, and the way it alters how you play, that's really yanked our levers and tickled our cogs.

DRESS PASSES: Talk about a cool start. Mix up Max's outfit and he'll wear it for the rest of the game.

"MAX NOW GETS A WRENCH IN ONE HAND AND A PISTOL IN THE OTHER"

Where once the combat was limited to either 'close' or 'ranged' depending on which character you selected, main man Maximillion now gets a wrench in one hand and a pistol in the other. Hold down L1 and you'll blast away at your enemy from a distance, let go and you'll instantly transfer to sweeps of your selected cudgel.

Each character also comes packing something called a Ridepod – one of those mini mechs that we mentioned earlier – which can be used against larger enemies in both boss battles and the improved dungeon sections.

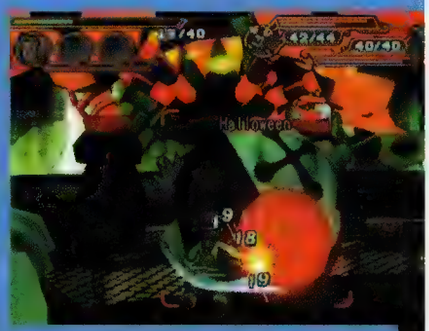
The second big shift comes with Max's ability to invent stuff from scratch. For want of a better description it's like *Fatal Frame* pop riveted on to an episode of Scrapheap Challenge. Early on in the action Max picks up a camera with which he can take photographs of items in the environment. Working from blueprints that he's acquired from clues in books, Max can then combine these pictures to form the seeds of ideas which, in turn, will lead to the creation of the inventions themselves – as long as he's got the necessary raw materials to hand. It may well sound like a pad

PSM2 FIRST PLAY

DUNGEON FASTER

3 Things below ground now run along at a much faster rate thanks to a cavern or two loaded with innovations. As well as the Ridepods you'll now find monsters with rage meters, boxes that can be picked up and used as missiles, and a natty medal reward system that benefits both the fast and the furious as well as the plodding dungeoneers. Throw in a few mid-level boss battles and everything suddenly seems a whole lot less repetitive.

SHARP PRIZE: You'll win medals if you either get through a dungeon quickly or entirely rid it of monsters.



NICE BREAKER: Boss battles pop up often, breaking the tedium of fighting through ten similar looking levels.

THAT'S YOUR 'BOT: Steve's your first Ridepod, but you can pick up extra parts and build new ones from scratch.

HEAVEN SPENT: This time you have to flip a coin to find out if power-ups are 'good' or 'evil.'

SWING BEAUTS: Fishing returns, but the idea of a few rounds of mini golf has got us all packing our plus fours.

LENS GLARE: Point the camera at some people and they'll strike a pose. Just the first of a hundred neat little touches.

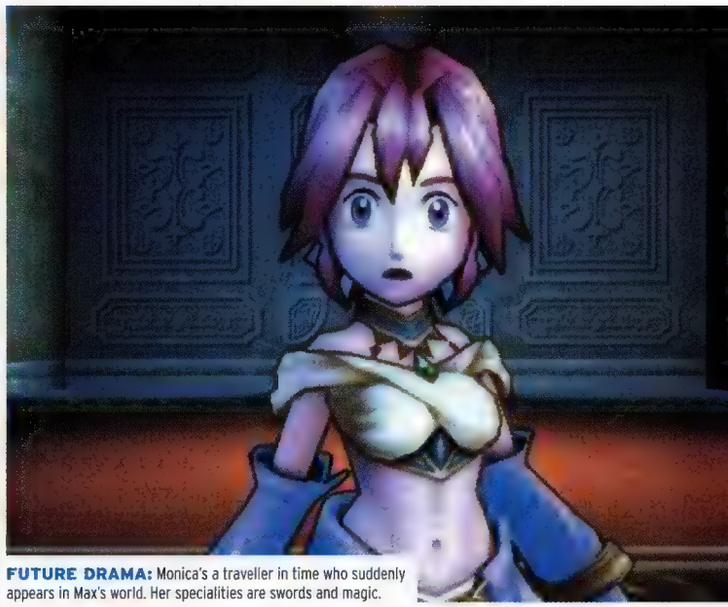
fumbling fiddlefest but, once you get used to the various menus, it's no worse to navigate than the village construction system of the earlier game. As far as depth of play and a sense of satisfaction's concerned, though, it makes *Dark Chronicle* practically untouchable.

Whether it's pushing Max about with one hand after you've cleared a dungeon floor – the other being occupied with a cup of tea – or wasting hours taking photos of stuff that might be useful for inventions, this is an RPG that simply won't let you go or stop giving out. **PSM2**

Next month: Scramble back here for the full block slotting review.

GREET EXPECTATIONS

4 *Dark Cloud* was always a character piece with everyone having something to say about the way they wanted their village constructed. In *Chronicle* there's an even larger population, but now the folks in the towns either provide a service – such as food, supplies or weapons – or are there to act as guides to the various items you need to collect for your inventions.



FUTURE DRAMA: Monica's a traveller in time who suddenly appears in Max's world. Her specialities are swords and magic.

FLASH STREET KIDS: Donny's the kid who gives you the camera. Snap some scoops for him and he'll reward you.

FEARS OF A CLOWN: Flotsam wants to steal the stone necklace that Max wears.

HANDS-ON VERDICT

5 We're still dipping in and out of *Dark Cloud* even now, and still discovering new features and clever nuances as we go. With *Dark Chronicle* presenting everything with added panache and somehow multiplying its output on just about every level – and that includes one of the most dynamic scores we've heard in this type of game – we're worried that this'll eat up another elephant-sized chunk of our lives. A while ago we said that you need to choose wisely which RPG you buy, as there just isn't enough hours in the day. With this, plus the imminent arrival of another *Final Fantasy* and *Breath of Fire* it seems that this choice is getting even more difficult.

You'll love it because...
You hated the fact that the last one had to come to an end.

You'll hate it because...
You love games where you never really have to get involved.

DVD ACTION
An evil clown, an elephant called Linda and a robot called Steve... All becomes clear the minute you slot in this month's DVD.

ORIGINALITY ★★★★
HANDLING ★★★★
PRESENTATION ★★★

Dark Chronicle

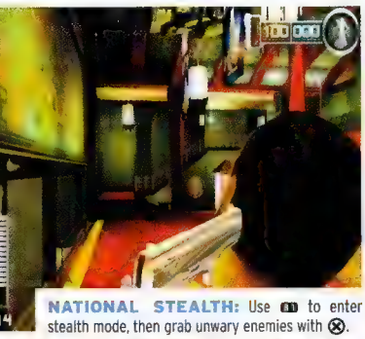
INFO
- **DEVELOPER** Level 5
- **PUBLISHER** SCEE
- **GAME TYPE** RPG

ANTICIPATED FEATURES
- Seven huge worlds to explore and invent your way across.
- Two playable characters, both with upgradable Ridepods to pilot.
- Two boss battles per dungeon, plus revisions to the power-ups as well as throwable crates.

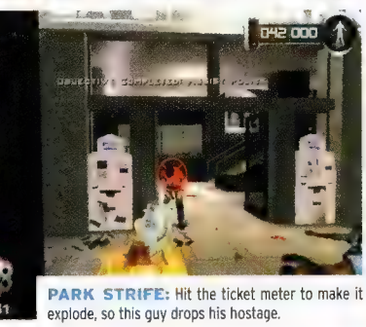
WHERE IT'S AT...
- Almost as tidy as the jap code. No real excuse for the tardy June release date.

HANS SOLO

1 There's more than one way to boil an egg, apparently. Yeah, whatever. Essentially, charging in all guns blazing isn't always the best approach – especially when it's you against the world. Using enemies as shields, and taking advantage of the environment will sometimes help you gain the advantage and take less damage in the process...



NATIONAL STEALTH: Use L1 to enter stealth mode, then grab unwary enemies with ⊗.



PARK STRIFE: Hit the ticket meter to make it explode, so this guy drops his hostage.

EXPECTED UK 25TH APRIL

DIE HARD: VENDETTA

Strip down to your freakin' vest and make fists with your freakin' toes – John McClane's back in town. Fancy getting the freak out?

PSM2 FIRST PLAY

DESPITE McClane's "How can the same shit happen to the same guy twice?" outburst in Die Harder, the same 'shit' did, of course, happen a third time in Die Hard With A Vengeance. So it's hardly surprising he's a little grey in *Vendetta*, having gone toe-to-toe with Germanic arch-criminals on three separate occasions. Now, just when he's getting ready to spend his autumn years bloating his waistline in front of the TV, someone else turns up to shatter the peace and shit and stuff.

Set a few years after Vengeance, Vivendi's FPS pits him against a mysterious enemy who's got a score to settle, and kidnaps John's daughter as a way of getting to him. McClane sets about trailing him through LA (see Hans Across The World), unravelling a sinister plot as he goes.

Graphically, the game's pretty uninspired (apart from some slick reflection effects), but while mostly consisting of gun-toting gameplay, *Vendetta* also provides an authentic Die Hard atmosphere to back up the action. In addition to McClane's one-liners and liberal use of expletives, the rest of the cast provide light relief. Like when John unties an usher at the start of the Chinese Cinema level, and he turns out to be incredibly camp, referring to our muscle-bound hero as 'sweetie', and telling him how much his bonds were chafing. High-larious.

"McCLANE SETS ABOUT TRAILING HIM THROUGH LA UNRAVELLING A SINISTER PLOT AS HE GOES"

Interestingly, a stealth mode's included, providing gameplay choices in certain situations: Do you run straight into a room, spraying hot lead everywhere, or sneak up behind a bad guy, and use him as a human shield? From what we've seen so far, this has confusing results; occasionally his comrades'll lower their weapons, other times they'll rip right through him. It definitely needs some tweaking before release.

BLAM SANDWICH: This guy either works in a butchers or he's got serious social problems...

The game was one player-only on Gamecube, but developers Bits Studios have thankfully seen fit to beef up this PS2 version. Hence, we've got a multiplayer mode.

Rather worryingly, given its April release, the fourplayer game wasn't working in our preview code, but our limited access was at least fairly enjoyable, though nowhere near *'Splitters 2* levels of appeal.

Another previous criticism of the game was the aiming system. With auto-aim on, it was too easy – without it, it was tough to get a shot on target. Happily, this has now been addressed. We'll see how much effect these changes have on the game's performance come April. **PSM2**

Out in April. You mothers.

GET YOUR HANS ON THESE...

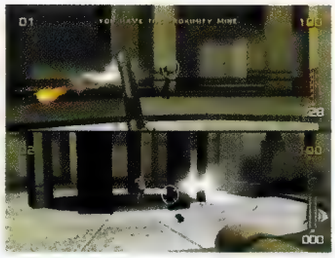
HEAT ME BABY:

UZI DOES IT:

ASSAULT & PEPPER:

TWIN, LOSE OR DRAW:

DIE HARD: White-collar workers ditch the filing and go totally postal.



DIE HARDER: Pistol Vs Rocket Launcher? We know which one we'd choose...

DIE HARDEST: The 'bots provide some excellent cannon fodder.

FOR GOD'S SAKE JUST FRIKKIN' DIE: Action on the roof of Nakatomi Plaza.

IT'S ALL IN YOUR HANDS

3 The best new feature in PS2 *Vendetta* is the multiplayer mode. There are 14 levels available, mostly based on areas found in the main game, but also including a couple of purpose-built ones, such as the Boxing Ring. There're six different game modes available, including Deathmatch, Team Deathmatch and King Of The Hill, and computer controlled 'bots are included to beef up the roster when you're a bit short handed. We're promised a hundred playable characters, split into six groups – Civilians, Police, Gangs, Workers, Prisoners and Mercenaries; many of which will have to be unlocked during the course of the single player game.

COMING SOON

ONLY IN PSM2 - TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES FIRST!

COP A LOAD OF THIS: The fuzz get a kicking in their own Nick. Watch McClane go mental.

HANS AROUND THE WORLD

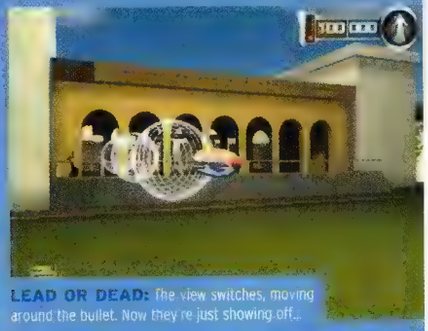
4 Well, LA at least. McClane's on the trail of the kidnappers, and his task takes him through a variety of locations across the city (even the Nakatomi Plaza from the first film). The levels are fairly expansive, and though the path through them is a linear one, the choice of approach, in certain situations at least, provides some opportunity for a little strategy. Here's a sampler of what we've come across during our playtest...

HURT OF ART: John gets busy in the museum at the start of the game.

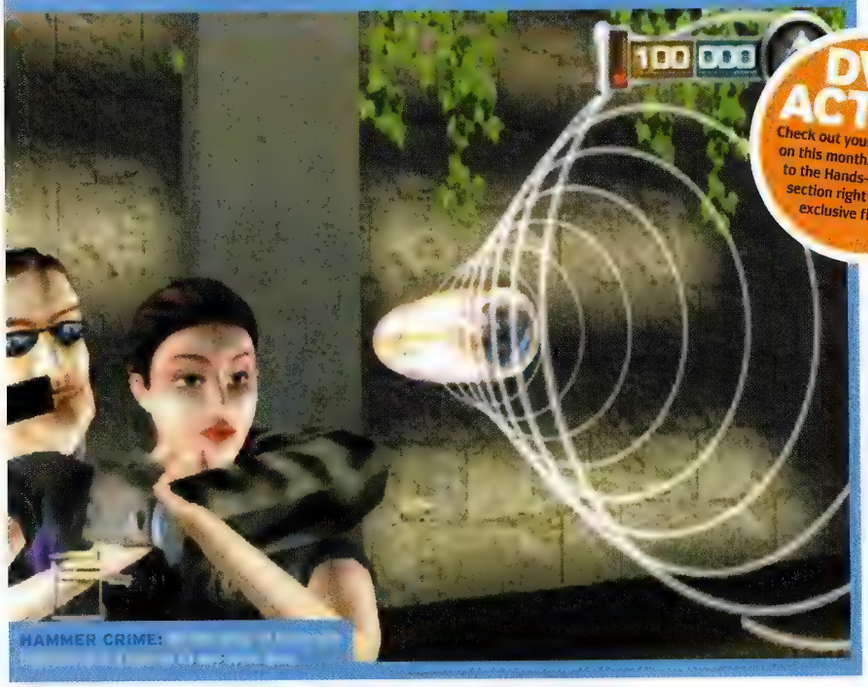
TAKE YOUR HANS OFF MY DAUGHTER

5 The game's use of Matrix-style slow-mo effects is pretty effective. Pop a couple of slugs into an enemy, and watch them drop slowly to the floor like messed-up tea bags. This effect's even better in sniper mode – and here's an example, where McClane must use the sniper rifle to take out the terrorist who's holding his daughter.

SNIPE TO MEET YOU: Zoom in close, steady your hand, avoid your daughter, and take the shot.



LEAD OR DEAD: The view switches, moving around the bullet. Now they're just showing off...



HAMMER CRIME:

DVD ACTION
Check out your Brucie Bonus on this months' DVD – head to the Hands-on Previews section right now for an exclusive first look.

TUNNEL VISION: We're in the dark subway but hey – we've got night-vision!

A SLAY AT THE MOVIES: No time for a flick here, you've got to nail that dude quick.

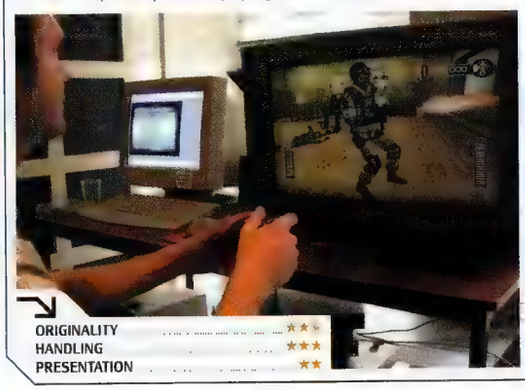
HANS-ON VERDICT

DIE HARD VENDETTA

6 OK, so the bulk of the game plays like a fairly average first-person shooter, but Bits have at least managed to convey a convincing Die Hard feel. The actor picked to sound like Bruce Willis is convincing most of the time, and he's got a great repertoire of McClane quips. The rest of the cast also provides lots of comedy value, bringing some much-needed humour to the action, and there's some impressive action movie-like set pieces. The stealth mode provides opportunities for different approaches to situations, although this currently needs tweaking for consistency's' sake. The multiplayer provides some longevity, but we're still not convinced it'll hold our attention for long, and while the slow-mo bullet-time stuff might be clichéd through its overuse in games, it's done pretty well here. Overall, we're expecting a solid, if not exactly bowel-shatteringly good finished product come Friday 25th April. Check back next issue for the review.

You'll love it because...
You can't get enough of Die Hard and McClane's motor mouth.

You'll hate it because...
You've been spoiled by the multiplayer genius of *TimeSplitters 2*.



ORIGINALITY ★★☆
HANDLING ★★★
PRESENTATION ★★

INFO
- **DEVELOPER** Bits Studios
- **PUBLISHER** Vivendi Universal
- **GAME TYPE** First Person Shooter

ANTICIPATED FEATURES
- Single player action featuring John McClane in a brand new story set several years after Die Hard With A Vengeance.
- An all-new four-way multiplayer with 14 levels and six different game modes.

WHERE IT'S AT...
- The build we've got is a fairly early one, so undoubtedly some of the problems will have been fixed by now – but time's running out if it's to

KOEI
Born to Battle!
Fight masses of enemies with a variety of techniques, including magical rune attacks! Create your own fighting style; combining magical and physical attacks!
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EXPECTED UK 28TH MARCH

DEF JAM VENDETTA

Kickin' it in an old school stylee – with steel toe caps...

DEF OR GLORY

1 Although there aren't many rules on the Def Jam circuit – clangs in the family jewels seem to be encouraged – there's a disappointing lack of any gats, AKs or even shanks in the tourney. You're also restricted to the bare minimum of match types – survival, tag team and handicap – with no ladders or cages in sight. On the bling side, there are some spectacular tag moves to discover.

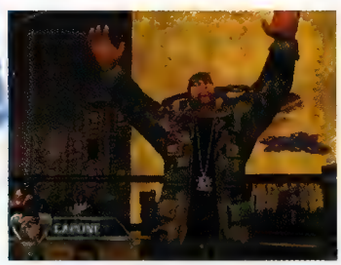
SMILEDRIVER: Many of the moves are frankly ridiculous - especially when your power up the 'Blazin' bar.

FOURPLAY: Yes. You and three other 'home-boys' can 'whup ass' simultaneously. Word!

TANKS A BUNCH: It's tricky to separate the 'made-up' characters from the 'famous' pros.

YES YES, y'all. Rated on sheer blingocity, ***Def Jam*** **scores a gold-plated ten. A total of 45 pimps, hustlers, mack-daddies and gen-u-ine MCs converge in a biggity-bamfest of pure violence that's had us throwing shapes, pouring forties and rolling in our 5.0 for the best part of a weekend. Word to your momma. Dog.**

PSM2 FIRST PLAY



ARMS RACE: Capone is a tiny fella in real life - not so his mega-biceped in-game incarnation.

In theory, it's the perfect recipe for bringing wrestling to the lycra-phobic masses – replace professional athletes with growling rappers, drab move titles with names like 'the Ghetto blaster', and The Rock with, um, some 'rocks'. Of crack. Or something.

Twelve of the wrestlers are artistes from the Def Jam label, including Ludacris, Method Man, DMX and Ghostface Killah – naturally, each features heavily on the soundtrack. They're all part of the illegal Def Jam wrestling circuit run by sinister hulk D-Mob – who, in the tradition of these things, is inexplicably going out with your ex-girlfriend. Your mate Manny is in hock to the outfit, and you're trying to... oh, sod it. The point is, it's all done with maximum ghetto-fabulousness and sweet, sweet style. Dan G's medallion-draped namesake wears an Adidas tracksuit and throws opponents down in a Capoeira style – Method Man and Redman are more traditional grapplers. *Wrestlemania N64* vets Aki provide the grappling dynamics – EA Big add a generous blob of Vaseline-smeared set-pieces. Sling in the ability to 'earn' girlfriends with your homie-bruising skills and you've got the perfect synergy of all things hip hop – ladies, violence and chunky gold chains.

"ALL DONE WITH MAXIMUM GHETTO-FABULOUSNESS AND SWEET STYLE"

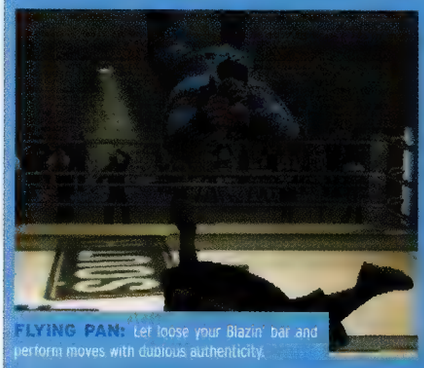
Violent? You bet your steroid-toned ass it's violent. One character seems pathologically obsessed with pickling everyone's chutneys, another tramples your face in stiletto heels, and everyone – *everyone* – has a special move guaranteed to bring tears to your eyes. NORE's probably contravenes UN regulations. Suplexes, powerbombs and dropkicks can be countered, throws can be chained into combos – all animated with shuddering authority.

Vendetta's main appeal is that it makes wrestling palatable to people who can't tell a Majistrol Cradle from a drop toehold. The combination of extreme violence, blazing tunes and gratuitous lesbianism had people here gathered around the TV for most of an afternoon, and the Story mode kept us going into the night. It could do with using a yelping commentator and the invaluable Create-A-Wrestler mode, but this homie's shaping up as a real contender. **PSM2**

Yo! Review next issue.

MAMA SAID KNOCK YOU OUT

2 Remember that brilliant bit in, possibly, every single Jean Claude Van Damme film where JC's best mate gets painfully crippled in bad-bloke-defining slow-mo? That'll be the finishers in *Def Jam Vendetta*, that will. Fill your Blazin' bar to the limit by playing to the crowd, then taunt, grapple and booyaka! Mark our words, though: everything tends to go a bit blurry, just prior to a dizzying burst of aggression.



FLYING PAN: Let loose your Blazin' bar and perform moves with dubious authenticity.

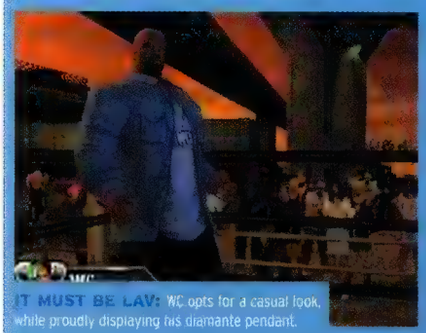
AFTER PINNER MINT: Plant your opponent on the canvas and win with a pin.

FACE RELATIONS: Yes, it's the clash of the faces: Ghostface versus Scarface. Ace.

GRIPPER STEBSON: Perform a grab on your foe, on Blazin', then knock him senseless!

MOB'S A GOOD 'UN

4 The slack on the roster's taken up by some extremely thinly disguised versions of 'celebrity' people, such as the notorious pimp Iceberg Slim, but – as you'd expect – the real stars of *Vendetta* are the Def Jam crew themselves. They provide their own voices for the game, and most of them had significant input when it came to deciding what moves they'd be able to bust out in a pagger.



IT MUST BE LAV: MC opts for a casual look, while proudly displaying his diamanté pendant.

SHEIK YOUR BOOTY: Ghostface killer's headgear and bling are recreated to perfection.

MURRAY MINT: The fighters maintain it was the love of the game (rather than cash) that made them get involved.

LADY BUMPS: Play as your own girlfriend (!?!) and beat up other [ladies] after a piece of your ass.

HO NO YOU DON'T

3 "Life ain't nothin' but [pretty girls] and money," muses rap philosopher Ice Cube in seminal NWA hit Gangsta Gangsta. No surprise, then, that *Def Jam* sees you fighting for both. Ditch your honey for a new, flyer one, and the laydeez fight for your affection – the winner offering to sell you photos of herself at ten grand a pop. Classy.

HO DOWN: Fight, win, and gain the affections of an ever increasing mound of lovely ladies.

HANDS-ON VERDICT

5 In terms of psychology, *Def Jam* emulates real (fake) wrestling better than *Smackdown*. Varied offensive moves are key to building up the Blazin' bar, but kicking out of a pinning attempt also gives you a boost, helping the seesaw of momentum in a match. Limb-specific energy bars make submissions easier to plan, even if they still take ten minutes to actually do. The AI's a shade ruthless at the moment – it'll take an initial beating, then slap you like a newborn baby – but we trust that'll be fixed. The real problem is, matches can get repetitive – there's nowhere near the move variety of *Smackdown*, or the ability to set people up for elaborate furniture moves that we're used to. Still, as wickety-whack fun goes, big props to EA Big again.

You'll love it because...

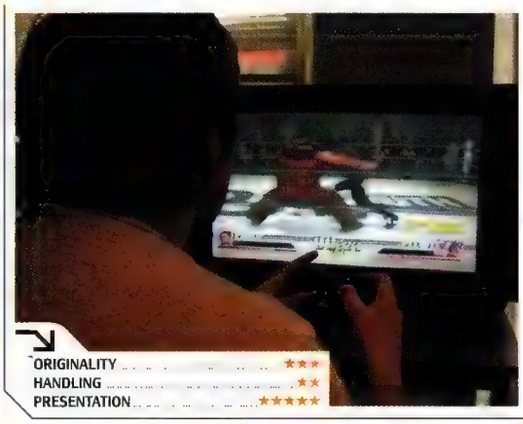
It's dope *and* fresh – a fighting game that doesn't take itself at all seriously, but still delivers on the crunching violence.

You'll hate it because...

You remember the travesty that was *Wu Tang: Taste The Pain*

DVD ACTION

Stop what you're doing right now, sucka, and head straight to this month's disc where you can catch these cats in action in Accelerator Fly.



ORIGINALITY ★★★
HANDLING ★★
PRESENTATION ★★★★★

DEF JAM VENDETTA

INFO
- DEVELOPER
- PUBLISHER
- GAME TYPE Fighting

ANTICIPATED FEATURES
- 45 wrestlers, with 12 real live rap artists, including DMX, Ludacris and Method Man.
- Five girlfriends, each with a picture gallery.
- Ten highly-detailed underground hip hop venues, each filled with animated crowds.
- Over 1500 unique moves.
- Three game modes: Battle, Story and Survival.

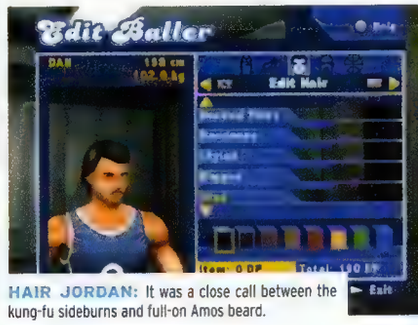
WHERE IT'S AT...
- We're sincerely hoping they'll make it a bit easier, but apart from that...

EXPECTED UK 21ST MARCH

GET THE POINTS IN: Good performances are rewarded with new character stat points.

A STAR IS BORN

1 For that parental flush of satisfaction, you can create an urban legend from scratch, or even an entire team. Rather than plonk the obligatory comedy afro on a fat man, we opted for a lanky Princeton jock look, replete with Grecian 2000 fringe plate and Errol Flynn moustache. Very street.



HAIR JORDAN: It was a close call between the kung-fu sideburns and full-on Amos beard.

NBA STREET VOL. 2

Afros, pencil moustaches and starburst sprinkled sepia slams – finally, a B-baller that makes *perfect* sense for curtain-twitching Brits.

PSM2 FIRST PLAY

BASKET CASE: Monster slams are rewarded with multi-angle replays, ideal for taunting your foes.

BULLS EYE: There are three versions of Michael Jordan – young, old and evenly balanced street legend.

COURT OUT: The game is big on unlockables, like new courts, displayed as miniature trading cards.

YEAH, sure, so you're probably not 6'7", built like Bolo Yeung and wickedy-wack like Jay-Z, but don't flick the page just yet. Y'see, *NBA Street Vol. 2* is cunningly designed to appeal to your *inner* urban B-boy, in the same way that *SSX Tricky* appeals to folk who'd rather be sitting on a tropical beach, or *PES2* to people who'd rather be watching men in pants tickle each others with ladders. Within minutes of dunking the disc in our PS2, even the most conservative members of the team were whooping and high-fiving like ghetto superstars liberated by the shame-shielding anonymity of the games room.

"IT'S ALL ABOUT FAST PASSING, AGGRESSIVE BLOCKING AND SLAMS"

Fans of the prequel know the deal. It's three-on-three licensed basketball, served with a dash of urban cred and a pinch of *SSX*'s 'trick equals boost' showtime gameplay. First team to 21 wins, so it's all about fast passing, rude trickery, aggressive blocking and slams – a bit like arcade fave *NBA Jam*, swapping squeaky courts for crumbling stone and thigh-length socks for bell-bottom flares.

The improvement's obvious. The graphics are celery crisp, with sweeter animation and a blaxploitation hue. The presentation's immaculate, from the swooping streets of the menu screens, to the bass-pumping pre-match camera pans. The details are immense – tunes from Nate Dogg and Nelly flit beneath the action, sharply contrasted by the grunts and hoots of the players. The commentary is equally astounding. "Up above, a seagull, a nickel... WOOO!" deadpans the caramel smooth announcer as you shatter the backboard.

Trick moves are performed using shoulder buttons. Press L1 and R1 to dazzle your marker, leaving you a clean slam. The Boost meter is finite but replenishes with time, enabling higher leaps, stronger blocks and wilder shots. New moves include a kick pass (L3 and ⊗), a one-two style pass with the right analogue stick, and the Off The Heezay – where you bounce the ball off your opponent's noggin for a cheeky return pass.

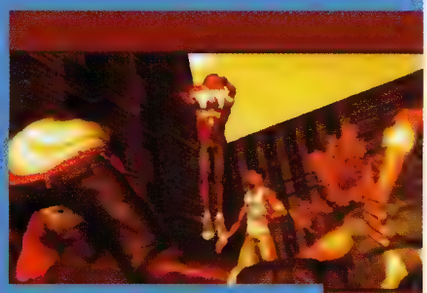
Repetitive? Yes, it's basketball – but that's missing the point. *NBA Street Vol. 2* is sheer proto-reality empowerment – that moment as you spin into the air, nutmeg your marker or tip dodge a last gasp three pointer. The pace is relentless, the visceral impact undeniable – you might not hail from Philly, but EA's urban playa should keep you off the streets and glued to your PS2. **PSM2**

The hood's going off this March.

MAKE OR BREAK

2 The Gamebreaker lets you reverse control of the game in one screen-detonating special move. Build up your Special bar, and the ball starts to flash indicating the Gamebreaker. To increase the tactical element, you can either 'pocket' the Gamebreaker (tap Ⓐ) – aiming for an unstoppable level two Gamebreaker shot – or go for the quick points. Gamebreakers count as regular baskets, but takes one off your opponent's score too – invaluable for those 19-20 scorelines.

STARS AND STRIKES:



SLAM SHADEY:

HOOP OF THE DAY:

HANGING TOUGH: The star underneath the players tells you when it's a good time to shoot.

DUNK AND DISORDERLY: The combo string is displayed at the bottom of the screen.

FLIP SERVICE: The biggest scoring tricks use all four shoulder buttons, but carry a greater risk.

BLOCK AND PROUD: Blocking requires crucial timing to steal the ball, easier said for taller players.

SLAM PICKINGS

3 The key to building your Special bar and scoring BIG is mastering the combo system. Regular two point shots are worth a piddling 250 points, but a rebound+trick +dunk combo could earn you in excess of 20,000, rocketing your Gamebreaker bar half full. Like *SSX*, hold different shoulder button combos (eg, L1, R2) for complex tricks and dunks. By winning competitions, you can earn mega-scoring Boss character special moves.

LEGENDS OF THE BALL

4 In NBA Challenge mode you take control of one of the leading teams and take on regional teams to earn development points, which can be exchanged for new courts, characters and stat points. The Be A Legend mode sees you touring the streets of NY, Philly and Chicago – among others – challenging Eminem lookey-likeys and Afro masters. It's a wee bit like *Pokémon* – defeat a team and you can nick their key player. Ooh, Stretch.

PROS AND CONS:

PHILLY OCEAN:

A STRETCH IN TIME:

TIP OF THE MORNIN':

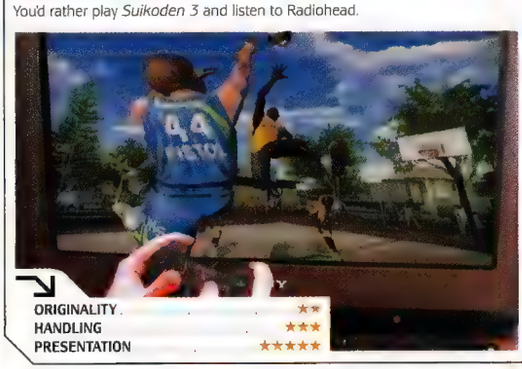
DVD ACTION
Head over now to this months disc to check out just how, um, 'street' *NBA Street* looks in the Hands-on Previews section.

HANDS-ON VERDICT

5 "Post!" yelled Jonnie, plopping *NBA Street Vol. 2* onto his desk. A week later, the disc hadn't moved. Not that we hated the original *NBA Street* – it was a decent-ish game – but a bitter disappointment after EA Big's success with *SSX* and glaringly repetitive. Suddenly, a cry rang out from the games room, "Bloody hell, look at this". *NBA Street Vol. 2* was on the TV, dazzling a crowd of onlookers with its swishy menus and thumping soundtrack. Initial impressions weren't misleading – the game is deeper than ever, with lots of humiliation-heavy specials, neat one-twos and tactical player selection. Unlike before, it's not just a case of assembling three nine-foot beanpoles, but a balance of guardsmen, ballplayers and slam dunkers. The Be A Legend mode teases you with unlockable characters and an ever-expanding skill set. Say what you will about EA, but their dedication to pizazz – a harmony of funky visuals, phat beats and killer details – ensures every slam dunk makes you feel like the *man*, whether you're a seven-foot Superstar rapper or chicken-legged average Jim.

You'll love it because...
You're an open-minded, closet show-off who demands relentless thrills.

You'll hate it because...
You'd rather play *Suikoden 3* and listen to Radiohead.



ORIGINALITY	★★
HANDLING	★★★
PRESENTATION	★★★★★

INFO
- DEVELOPER
- PUBLISHER
- GAME TYPE

ANTICIPATED FEATURES

WHERE IT'S AT...

EXPECTED UK 23RD APRIL

GLOW ENTRY: You've got to keep loading rounds into foe as there's no guarantee they're dead.

FLY SOCIETY: As well as wielding hand weapons and droids, you also get to pilot beauties like this.

NEW FANGLED

1 The size and inventive use of weapons is what makes or breaks this type of game. What we really want, you see, is a massive selection of enormous guns and other vicious weaponry that all do lots of different things in a biggity-bam kinda way. And that's exactly what *Mace* provides.

MACE GRIFFIN BOUNTY HUNTER

Thought Jango was more munter than hunter? Then a squirt of Mace should be a right pick-me-up...

WE'RE liking this... Scratch that, we're *really* liking this. Our second play has left us marvelling about the solidity of this FPS, but also hankering after so much more. A chance to peg it into a hangar, requisition a ship and zip off for a deep-space dogfight for one. Then there's the allure of controllable security droids, plus the promise of yet more revelations in the coming months before release. Just goes to show, kick a dog when it's down and it'll chew your slippers to ribbons.

Aside from *'Splitters 2* and the *Red Factions*, it seems that innovation with shooters has all but dried up of late. But now, with *Mace*, there's a chance to recapture the glory days of *Half-Life*. A true-grit hero battling against an evil corporation. Sixteen blambastic weapons, (including a terrifying Gatling gun). A refreshingly well balanced layout to the levels. But the *real* reason we're excited about this is because of something we call Joel's Razor – that moment when a game pulls off the balance between response and logic. Seeing Mace get forced back by the recoil of his shotgun, discovering that enemies may well fall down, but that doesn't necessarily mean they're dead... Little touches maybe, but they all add up to something rather special.

That's not to say we're completely sold on *Mace* just yet – we've yet to see the ship piloting sections in action on PS2 – but if there's any FPS to be looking forward to in the early part of 2003, this is it. **PSM2**

No definite date as yet, but we hope to get stuck in next issue.

DVD ACTION
Whacking Jaidari scientists with the electro cosh and getting tacky-tile with the sticky bomb all on this month's disc.

"IF THERE'S ANY FPS TO BE LOOKING FORWARD TO IN THE EARLY PART OF 2003, THIS IS IT"

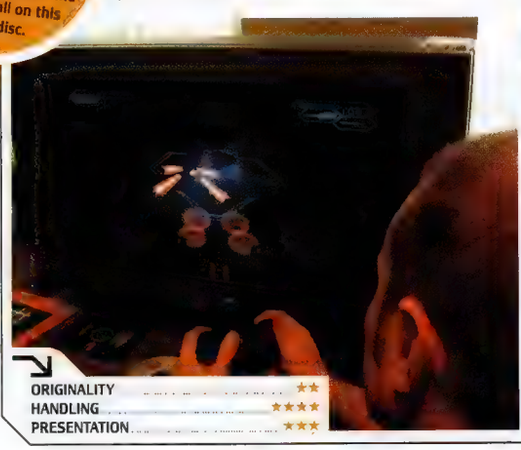
PSM2 FIRST PLAY

HANDS-ON VERDICT

2 None of the links between the areas are working in the build that we're currently playing but, somehow, that doesn't matter one jot. The sections we've been able to access are good and large, loaded with unpredictable tough enemies wearing cool energy armour and full of enough gore-spattered take downs to keep us running back for more. Even the ships are looking tasty, and the whole experience of running up inside them is only marred slightly by the fact that when you sit down in front of the controls nothing happens. That said, if, in the course of the next few months, Warthog can make the space combat run as slickly as the interiors do at the moment, we're going to be very happy indeed.

You'll love it because...
You've already completed *Half-Life* and the *Red Factions*.

You'll hate it because...
When you think 'warp drive', you picture spods with pasties taped to their heads.



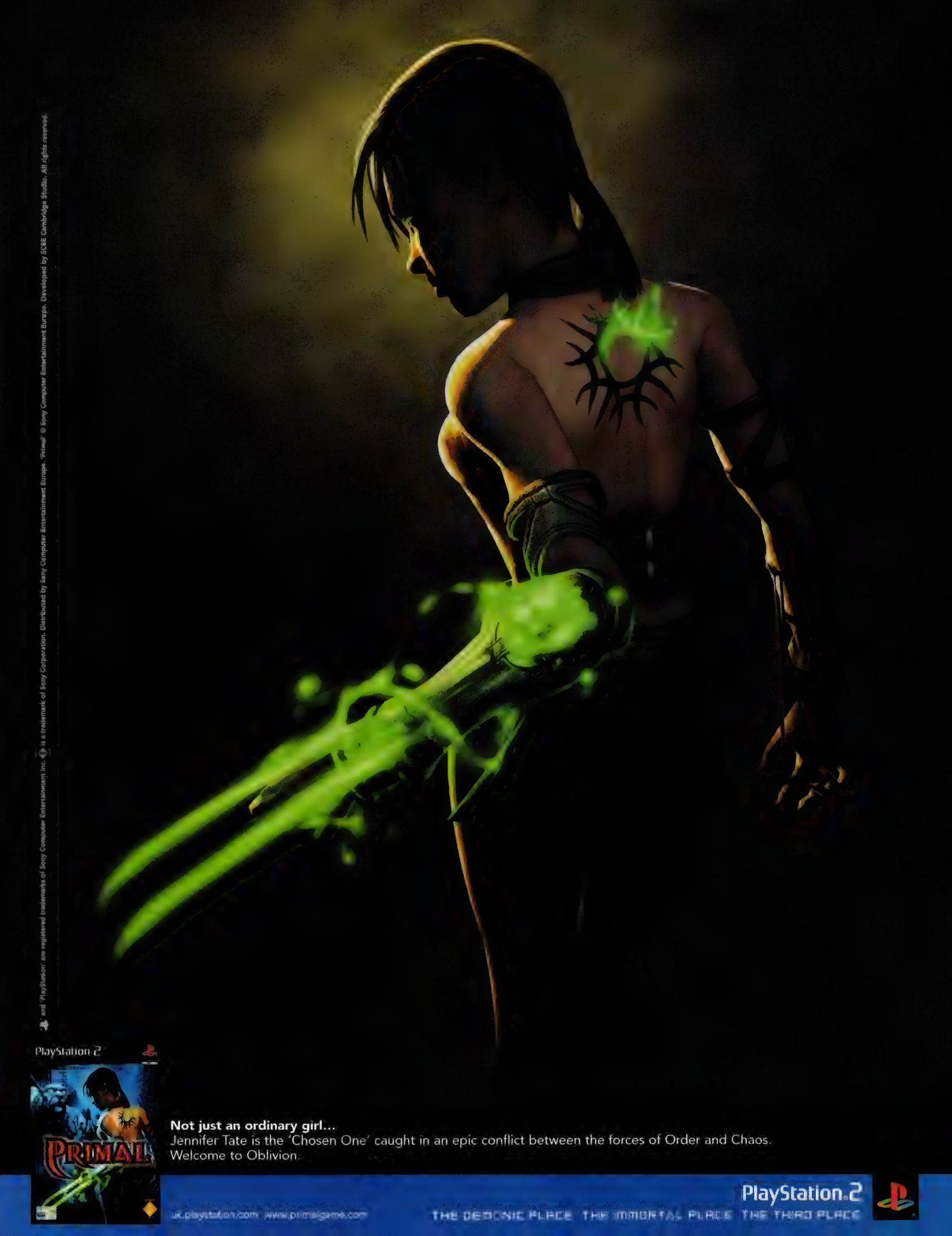
ORIGINALITY ★★
HANDLING ★★★★
PRESENTATION ★★★

MACE GRIFFIN BOUNTY HUNTER

INFO
- DEVELOPER
- PUBLISHER
- GAME TYPE

ANTICIPATED FEATURES

WHERE IT'S AT...


PlayStation 2
PRIMAL
Not just an ordinary girl...
Jennifer Tate is the 'Chosen One' caught in an epic conflict between the forces of Order and Chaos.
Welcome to Oblivion.
uk.playstation.com www.primalgame.com
PlayStation.2
THE DEMONIC PLACE THE IMMORTAL PLACE THE THIRD PLACE

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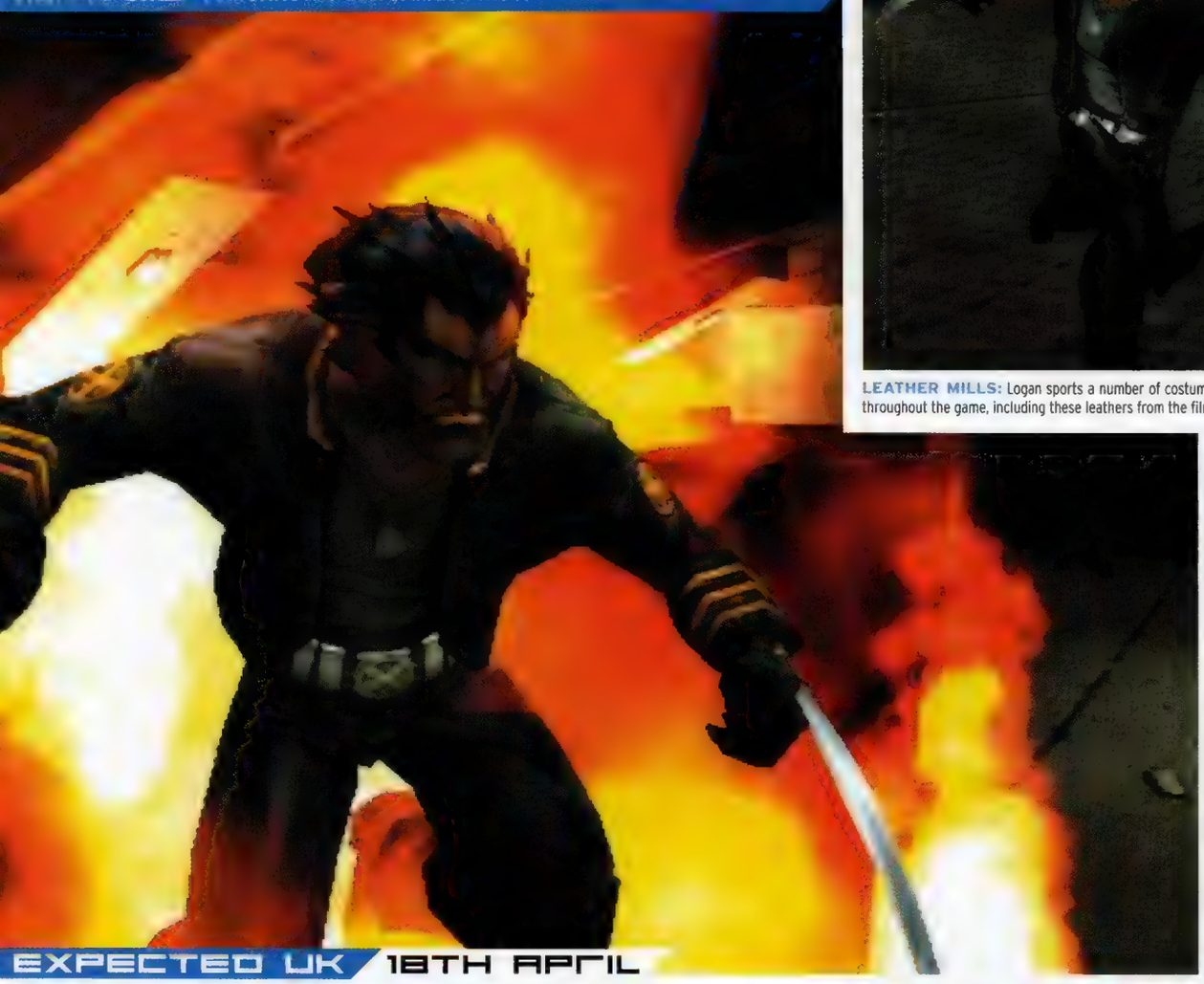


LEATHER MILLS: Logan sports a number of costumes throughout the game, including these leathers from the film.

DECISIONS, DECISIONS...

1 **Incidental choices can be made that don't affect the story but make you feel much more involved. For example, a plane crash lands you near a collapsing bridge, with an enemy guard hanging from the edge. You can 'save' him, killing him after you've pulled him up, or leave him to fall to his death.**

FIGHT-SABER: Wolverine isn't the only Weapon-X test subject...

EXPECTED UK 18TH APRIL

X-MEN: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE

X-ceptional or X-crement? Thankfully, Wolverine's solo effort looks like it'll carve up the competition...

TALK TO X-MEN comic fans about games based on their beloved series and the knuckle-knives come out quickly. Developers have failed to impress either the average thumb-twiddling gamer or the diehard Marvel fan with a series of uninspiring X-Men titles. *Wolverine's Revenge* may just bring them round.

In *Wolverine's Revenge*, hairy-faced hero Logan learns that the Weapon-X program that gave him his claws back in the '60s also included a lethal fail-safe virus that until now has been suppressed by his immune system. But the virus has just started to incubate, and Logan has 48 hours to find a cure. The game breaks this two-day trek into six 'acts' each containing up to six levels filled with fights, stealth and puzzle-solving.

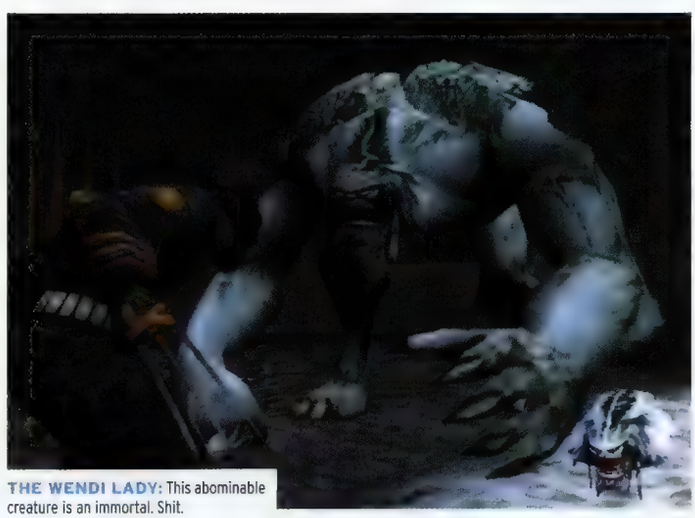
Wolverine is primarily a close combat fighter, so developers Genepool have spent a vast amount of time honing the feel of the battles. Well over 100 animations ensure the melees are dynamic, exciting events that hide the repetitive nature of the gameplay.

Impressive combat earns you a dog-tag. Collect enough of these and Wolverine will learn a new move. But this game rewards stealth as well. Killing a victim undetected will also earn a tag. The game also makes good use of Wolverine's Animal Senses. These allow Logan to sense hidden objects, follow guards by the scent they leave or track the heat from footprints. They also send him into his Feral Rage, a berserk state triggered if you start to really kick ass.

"100 ANIMATIONS ENSURE THE MELEES ARE DYNAMIC, EXCITING EVENTS"

It's touches like the Feral Rage that show how much Genepool have tried to blend in the comic. For example, Sabertooth is a constant presence in the game. In the comics, Sabertooth always makes an event of Wolvie's birthday by killing someone close to him or other similar taunt, and the same thing happens in the game. Classic characters and locations also make an appearance. Wendigo, a yeti-like immortal, is in there, as is the Void where you get to pilot Mech Warrior-esque Void Droids, one of the few chances Wolverine has to use projectile weapons. *Wolverine's Revenge* may not shake the world when it arrives, but it's definitely worth keeping an eye on. **PSM2**

X-Men should be out by Easter.



THE WENDI LADY: This abominable creature is an immortal. Shit.

PSM2 FIRST PLAY

COMBAT TO WHAT YOU KNOW

2 Genepool had to cut down on the number of animations they had in the game. There are still well over 100 unique moves that range from simple pins to walls with claws, through to elaborate multiple enemy acrobatics where Wolverine leaps around gutting, stabbing and snapping necks. Flash moves are executed by button sequences (the most complex being only four taps long) enabling you to fight fluidly while still looking the business.

SCORPION KICK: Wolverine, or Rene Higuita? You decide.

KEITH DROID:

BLADE AWAY: Got a problem? Get it off your chest, ahaha.

HEY ROBO, COP THIS: There's not much point aiming low on this monstrous fella, eh?

BEST-CHEST MAN: What chest-wig would be complete without a tacky medallion?

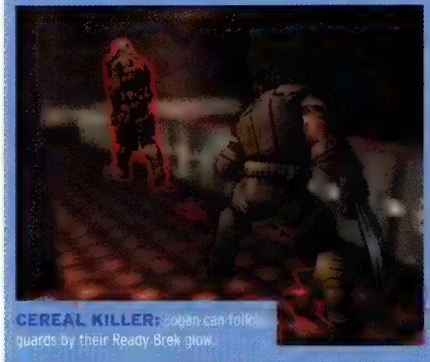
CHECK WEIGHT: Wolverine can throw enemies, or just stab 'em for laughs.

HEY, ISN'T THAT WOSSISNAME?

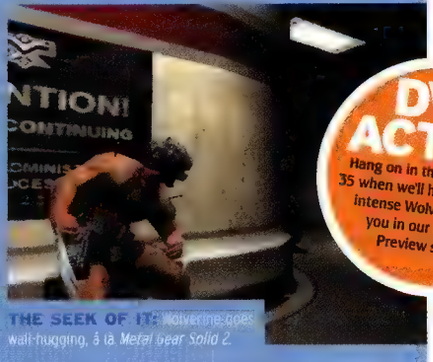
3 Let's not forget that this game has a film tie-in. The game features the vocal talents of baldy thesp Patrick Stewart and also the 'Official French Patrick Stewart' for the continentals. Strange but true. And who'd have thought Mark "I used to bullseye womp rats" Hamill would make such a good Wolverine?

STEALTH WARNING

4



CEREAL KILLER: Soggy can folks guards by their Ready Brek glow.



THE SEEK OF IT: Wolverine goes wall-hugging, á la *Metal Gear Solid 2*.

SIGHT PATH:

WHERE'S WOLVIE?

DVD ACTION
Hang on in there until issue 35 when we'll have lashings of intense Wolvie action for you in our Hands-on Preview section.

HANDS-ON VERDICT

5 ***Wolverine's Revenge*** **is the closest thing to a decent *X-Men* game we've seen so far. The combat is just fantastic, which is good because that's really all this game is about despite the puzzle/adventuring distractions. But there's a bit of an identity crisis going on. At the moment it's too tempting to button tap your way through the action, and dash through the stealth, making this game neither nowt nor summat. A tighter focus on mastering the moves, and a greater need for stealth would make it more cohesive.**

You'll love it because...
The combat is painfully good and a genuine pleasure to mess around with. Comic fans will love the authentic details.

You'll hate it because...
In the final hour, it doesn't quite come together properly. All the individual elements seem like a good idea so why doesn't it feel better to play, dammit?

ORIGINALITY ★★
HANDLING ★★★
PRESENTATION ★★★

X-MEN WOLVERINE'S REVENGE

INFO
DEVELOPER
PUBLISHER
GAME TYPE

ANTICIPATED FEATURES

WHERE IT'S AT...

COMING SOON

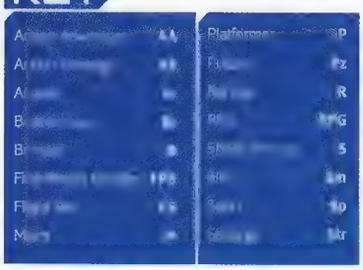
ONLY IN PSM2 - TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES FIRST!

EVERY KNOWN GAME ETA

INCOMING

Your monthly guide to the future of PS2 – no other magazine brings you such a comprehensive view.

KEY



MARCH 2003

Aero Elite Combat Academy	Sega	FS
Club Football	Codem'ters	Sp
Dance Dance Revolution Max	Konami	B
Devil May Cry 2	Capcom	AA
Dr Muto	Midway	AA
Evolution Snowboarding	Konami	Sp
Gallerians: Ash	Sammy	AA
Inquisition	Wanadoo	AA
King Of Route 66	Sega	R
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter	Vivendi	FPS
Malice	Vivendi	P
Mark of Kri	Sony	AA
Metal Gear Solid: Substance	Konami	AA
Midnight Club 2	Take 2	R
Moto GP3	Sony	R
Jurassic Park: Operation Genesis	Vivendi	AS
Lost, The	Ubi Soft	AA
Paris Dakar Rally 2	Acclaim	R
Pro Beach Soccer	Wanadoo	Sp
Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc	Ubi Soft	P
Silent Hill 2: Director's Cut	Konami	AA
SOCOM: US Navy Seals	Sony	AA
Syberia	Vivendi	AA
Tenchu: Wrath Of Heaven	Activision	AA
Vexx	Acclaim	P
Wakeboarding Unleashed	Activision	Sp
Whirl Tour	Vivendi	P
World Champ'ship Snooker 2003	Codem'ters	Sp
WWE Crush Hour	THQ	R
Zapper	Infogrames	P
ZOE2: The 2nd Runner	Konami	M

APRIL 2003

Black and White	tbc	AS
BloodRayne	Vivendi	AA
Def Jam Vendetta	EA	BT
Dragon's Lair 3D	THQ	AA
Shinobi	Sony	AA
War of the Monsters	Sony	Bt

MAY 2003

Black and Bruised	Vivendi	Bt
Enter The Matrix	Atari	AA
Indy Racing League	Codem'ters	R
Pro Beach Soccer	Wanadoo	Sp
Speed Kings	Acclaim	R

JUNE 2003

Hulk, The	Vivendi	AA
Tomb Raider: TAOD	Eidos	AA

LATE 2003

13	Ubi Soft	FPS
A Sound of Thunder	Bam!	AA
Akira Psycho Ball	Infogrames	Ar
Alter Echo	THQ	AA
Bad Boys 2	Empire	AA
Bruce Lee	Vivendi	Bt
Deus Ex2: Invisible War	Eidos	FPS
Die Hard Vendetta	Vivendi	FPS
Dredd Vs Death	Vivendi	AA
Final Fantasy 10-2	Sony	RPG
Finding Nemo	THQ	AA
Fire Warrior	THQ	FPS
Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	3DO	AA
Freaky Flyers	Midway	FS
Freedom: Battle for Liberty Island	EA	FPS
Futurama	SCi	AA
Ghostmaster	Empire	AA
Gran Turismo 4: Online	Sony	R
Mercedes-Benz World Racing	TDK	R
Mission: Impossible 2	Infogrames	AA
Moji Ribbon	Sony	B
Nightmare Creatures 3	Konami	AA
Pride FC	THQ	Bt
Return to Castle Wolfenstein	Activision	FPS
Soul Calibur 2	Sony	Bt
Suikoden 3	Konami	RPG
Tak: The Power of Juju	THQ	AA
This is Football 2004	Sony	Sp
Tom Clancy's Raven Shield	Ubi Soft	AS
Urban Freestyle	Acclaim	Sp
War of the Monsters	Sony	Bt
Warhammer 40,000	THQ	Str
X-Men: Wolverine's Revenge	Activision	AA

TO BE CONFIRMED...

A10 Warthog	tbc	P
Aliens Colonial Marines	EA	FPS
Armored Core 3	Metro 3D	M
ATV Offroad	Sony	R
Batman 2	Ubi Soft	AA
Ben Hur	Vivendi	R
Blood: The Last Vampire	Sony	AA
Bomberman Kart	Konami	R
Breath of Fire: Dragon Quarter	Capcom	RPG
Broken Sword: The Sleeping Dragon	Sony	AA
Bulletproof Monk	Empire	AA
Butterfly Table Tennis	Metro 3D	Sp
Capcom Fighting All-Stars	Capcom	Bt
Catan	Capcom	AA
Cauldron	TDK	AA
Celebrity Deathmatch	Take 2	Bt
Chariots: The First Olympics	Candella	R
Charlie's Angels	Ubi Soft	AA
Choplifter: Search & Rescue	Xicat	Ar
Clock Tower 3	Capcom	AA
Club Football	Codemasters	Sp
Coaster Works 2	Xicat	Str
Conflict: Desert Sabre	SCi	AS
Crank The Weasel	Midway	P
Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon	Ubi Soft	AA
CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	Ubi Soft	AA
Cubix Showdown	3DO	M
Curse: The Eye of Isis	Wanadoo	AA
Cy Girls	Konami	AA
Daredevil	THQ	AA
Dark Chronicle	Sony	RPG
Dead to Rights	Sony	AA
Death Crimson	Sammy	AA
Delta Force	Nova Logic	FPS
Destruction Derby 4	Sony	R
Dinotopia	TDK	AA
Dinoz	Vivendi	Sp
Disney All Stars	Konami	Sp
Dog's Tale	Sony	P
Driver 3	Infogrames	R
Dual Hearts	Konami	Sp
Duke Nukem Forever	Take 2	FPS
Dungeons and Dragons Heroes	Infogrames	AA
Engalus	tbc	AA
Everquest	Sony	RPG
Evil Dead: Fistful of Boomstick	THQ	AA
Evolution Skateboarding	Konami	Sp
F1 Racing Championship	Ubi Soft	R
Falcone	Virgin	FPS
Face Off	Cryo	AA
Final Fantasy 10-2	Sony	RPG
Final Fantasy 11	Sony	RPG
Final Fantasy 12	Sony	RPG
Forever Kingdom: Evergrace 2	tbc	RPG
Freestyle: Metal X	Midway	Sp
Fugitive Hunter	Infogrames	AA
Full Throttle 2	Activision	RPG
Galidor	tbc	AA
Ghost Hunter	Sony	AA
Gladius	Activision	RPG
Good Cop, Bad Cop	Revolution	AA
Gremlins	LSP	P
GT Racing	Midas	R
Guilty Gear X2	Sammy	Bt
H2Overdrive	Ubi Soft	R
Hardware: Online Arena	Sony	S
Harvest Moon: Save the Homeland	tbc	RPG
Heaven and Hell	CDV	Sm
Hot Wheels	THQ	R
Ice Nine	Bam!	FPS
Ico 2	Sony	AA
Indy Racing League	Codemasters	R
Inspector Gadget	LSP	P
Isle of Man TT	Codemasters	R
Jacked	3DO	AA
K-Project	Sony	AA
Kengo 2: Bushido Master	Ubi Soft	AA
MLB Slugfest	Midway	Bt
Monster Rancher 3	Tecmo	AS
Music 3	Codemasters	Sm
Myst 3	Ubi Soft	Pz
My Street	Sony	Pz
NASCAR Thunder	EA	R
NBA 2k3	Infogrames	Sp
NFL 2k3	Infogrames	Sp
NHL 2k3	Infogrames	Sp
Nickelodeon Party Blast	Infogrames	Pz
Nobunaga's Ambition Online	Koei	Str
Okage: Shadow King	Sony	RPG
One Must Fall: Battlegrounds	tbc	Bt
PaRappa the Rapper 3	Sony	B
Pillage	Zed Two	AS
Planetside	Sony	FPS
Project BG & E	Ubi Soft	AA
Red Dead Revolver	Capcom	S
Resident Evil Online	Capcom	AA
Resident Evil Survivor 4	Capcom	S
Richard Burns Rally	SCi	R
Risk	Infogrames	Pz
Robin Hood: Defender of the Crown	tbc	AA
RTX Red Rock	Activision	AA
Rubu Tribe	Interplay	AA
Rygar	Tacmo	Ar
Samurai Jack	Bam!	P
Savage Skies	LSP	FS
Sega Seabass Fishing Duel	Acclaim	Sp
Shaun Murry's Pro Wakeboarder	Activision	Sp
Shining Lore	Phantagram	RPG
Shoot to Kill	Codem'ters	FPS
Silent Hill 3	Konami	AA
Sim City 4	EA	S
Smash Cars Racing	Metro 3D	R
Smuggler's Run 3	Take 2	R
Snowboard Heaven	Capcom	Sp
SSX3	EA	R
Starcraft: Ghost	Vivendi	FPS
Star Ocean 3: Till the End of Time	tbc	RPG
Starsky And Hutch	Empire	AA
Stung	tbc	AA
Street Lethal	Activision	AA
Street Racing Syndicate	3DO	R
Super Bust-a-Move 2	Ubi Soft	Pz
SWAT: Urban Justice	Vivendi	AS
Tales of Destiny 2	tbc	RPG
Terminator 3	Infogrames	AA
Templar	TDK	AA
Tennis Master Series	Vivendi	S
Thunderbirds	SCi	AA
Titanium Angel	SCi	AA
Tribes 2: Aerial Assault	Vivendi	AA
True Crime	Activision	AA
Twisted Metal Online	Sony	S
Venus and Braves	Capcom	RPG
Virtual-on Marz	Sony	M
Voodoo Islands	Koch	AA
Wheel of Fortune	Infogrames	Pz
White Fear	Vivendi	AA
Wizardry	Ubi Soft	RPG
Worms 3	Ubi Soft	Pz
Wrath	Activision	AA
Xenosaga	Sony	RPG
Zapper	Infogrames	S

Incoming is your complete guide to the future for your PS2. The release dates are correct as we went to press. This listing is updated every issue – please dont give us a hard time about slippage, canning and alterations

10 PLAYABLE DEMOS OF THE HOTTEST NEW GAMES...

INCLUDING TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN

Play the hits of tomorrow with this month's Official PlayStation®2 Magazine

PLUS!
WORLD EXCLUSIVE SPLINTER CELL REVIEW!

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READ! Jak And Daxter 2, MGS2: Substance, Backyard Wrestling, plus every new PS2 game reviewed

PlayStation®2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

ISSUE 32 ON SALE 21 MARCH

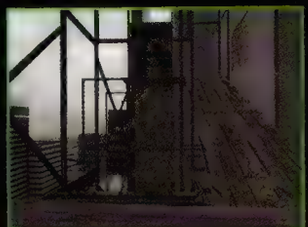
DVD ACTION

Head straight to the DVD, where we've got incredible never-seen-before footage in the Accelerator section.

CHINA CRISIS: The environments will be fully destructible - bad news for crates.

RUIN THE DAY

Using thousands of on-set photos, Shiny have meticulously recreated the world of The Matrix Reloaded with the sole purpose of letting you blow it to smithereens. Bullets leave chunky craters in soft metal, while pillars can be reduced to a framework of wire and rubble – just like the infamous shoot-out scene from the first movie.



PLANK CALL: Looks just like the skyscraper bit from the first film - good.

COP A BULLET: Those shiny balls are used for motion capture purposes – trendy, no?

BONUS FOOTAGE

The Wachowski brothers shot over an hour of exclusive footage for the game using real-life actors, an unprecedented step for a videogame conversion. The sound effects and music have been lifted straight from The Matrix Reloaded, while the Wachowskis will be fine tuning the in-game action cameras themselves for maximum impact.

SNOOP DEAD FED: You can nail the cops with ease.

DRAFT RETURNS! Check the DVD to see the light move.

HIT THAT GUARD: Niobe's kicks are devastating.

AGENTS UNDER FIRE

No Neo. No compromise. No expense spared. No-one's ever done anything like this, and that's why it's going to work.

OK, we confess. The *Enter The Matrix* screenshots we broke to the world back in PSM2#30 now seem a little deceptive to say the least. Joel – the only journalist to see the game first-hand – assured us everything was fine, but the rest of us weren't convinced. If this was the future of film licences, why did the screenshots look so jaggy? We'd longed for a game to do the movie justice, but our faith was fading into a series of lo-res images... until it all clicked into place with the whirr of a DVD player and a roundhouse kick to the chops...

SKETCH AND RELAX: Every scene was storyboarded.

Like every aspect of the Matrix universe, the Wachowski brothers were pulling the world over our eyes. It's only when you see the game in motion – fire up your PSM2 cover disc, now – that you realise the scale of Shiny's achievement. Sod the screenshots, you can't appreciate *Enter The Matrix* until you've seen Ghost leaping off a table in bullet-time slo-mo and flicking a roundhouse into some hapless guard's bonce to the muffled crack of broken bones. As Morpheus explains, "Nobody can be told what The Matrix is, you have to see it for yourself."

What is *The Matrix?* This we know. Players choose between ace pilot Niobe or zen Buddhist assassin Ghost. The story was scripted by the Wachowski brothers and runs parallel to the events of The Matrix Reloaded. The game will explain key parts of the film – so you'll have the drop on folk who've never picked up a DualShock 2. The BIG shock is that you can't play as Neo. Or Trinity. Or Morpheus. It's a disappointment, but hey, welcome to the real world.

"THIS IS SHAPING UP AS ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING GAMES OF 2003"

The action is split into four sections: fighting, driving, piloting the Logos ship and hacking. The plot is linear but your path alters depending how well you play. For example, there's a scenario where Ghost faces off against Trinity. Agent Smith should also make an appearance, but you won't be strong enough to fight him until later. There's an RPG-style character development system, so your first encounter with an agent should be dealt with tactically – by running away.

With 4000 motion captured moves and over an hour of unseen footage, *Enter The Matrix* is shaping up as one of the most exciting games of 2003. Soak up the details, gorge on the footage and believe the unbelievable. If film licences are the cancer of videogames, then *Enter The Matrix* might be the cure.

ENTER THE MATRIX

"BIFF, BIFF, BAFF"

FOCUS D.I.Y.

Biff, Biff, Baff... FOCUS... and spinning kick to the teeth. Kchhrrt! What could be more satisfying? Simply hold L1 to access the super slo-mo – or bullet-time – mode, controlled by your Focus meter. This causes the action to slow down so you can anticipate your opponents' blows and access gravity-ridiculing special moves. For example, if you Focus while two foes are attacking, you can grab one character's leg while booting the other in the face. If you jump while Focusing, your character will leap high over the action – almost on wires – to safety. If you're running towards a wall at an angle, the character will dance along it. If you jump and shoot while focusing, you'll perform a bullet-spitting corkscrew leap – check out Ghost on the DVD. You can also pull *Max Payne*-style diving leaps and cartwheel from behind pillars while shooting, like Neo in the original film – hold L1 to Focus, then press L1 or L2 to strafe in conjunction with the jump button. The slo-mo mode also lets you dodge bullets, reducing their trajectory to a leisurely smoke stream. Your Focus meter drops as you use it, but always charges back to 35%. To fill up the remaining points, you need to take out some more foes. Easy.

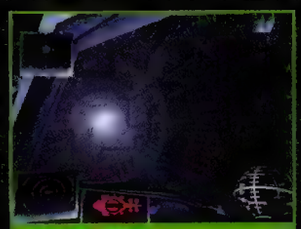
URBAN SMITH: You won't be able to defeat agents until late on.

ROOT DOC: You can download new moves on the menu screen.

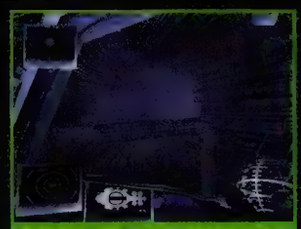
THE NECK OF TIME: Focusing lets you see attacks early.

UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT

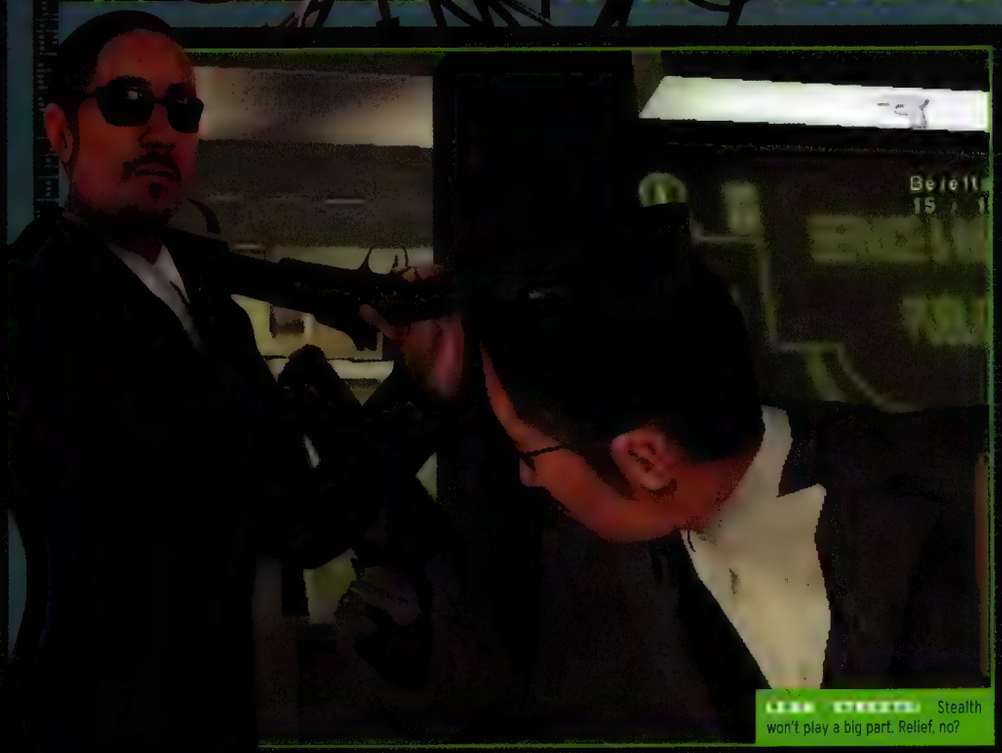
At the very end of the game, there's a section where you'll have to pilot the Lobos to defend Zion from incoming sentinels. Happily, once again, the experience will differ from character to character. At the moment, however, it all looks a bit dreary and redolent of PSone shooter *Descent*, but Shiny have assured us that with 1300 sentinels on-screen at any one time, there'll be little time to complain.



TUNNEL VISION: It looks dull here, but wait until you see it moving.



GHOST IN THE MACHINE: Gunner or pilot? The choice is yours.



LEAN WHITE: Stealth won't play a big part. Relief, no?

WE NEED GUNS

But who needs ammo? When characters run out of bullets in *Enter The Matrix*, they'll just reach into their coats for *another* shooter. There'll be over 12 weapons, including the Norinco 7.62mm sniper rifle, plus M16s, Colt .32s and Heckler-Koch MP5Ks. Simply tap L1 to un-holster your gun and unleash mayhem.

SHELL ON EARTH: Fire and forget – it's the *Matrix* way.

THE WORKS TROUSERS: Ghost plays a key role in the film.

ROUND AND ROUND WE GO

Combat takes milliseconds, but how long will it take to finish the game? "A lot depends on the style of play, but we expect about 50 hours of gameplay," suggests Dave Perry.

SPIN DOCTOR: Focus - then unleash roundhouse hell.

FLAME AND FORTUNE: Ghost uses his guns to punch.

JAB SENTRE: A well aimed poke disables foes instantly.

GHOST: REVEALED

If rumours can be believed, Ghost plays a small but significant role in the forthcoming film. One thing's for sure – his name features a long way down on the official cast credits. On the bright side, as a Zen Buddhist Apache assassin, he should be fairly hard. Ghost keeps his pistols out during hand-to-hand combat – leading to distinctive bullet punch moves where he boffs someone in the stomach before unleashing a shot. If you play as Ghost, the driving sections become a frantic FPS where you target incoming agents, leaving Niobe free to drive the car.

So why did Shiny choose Ghost, rather than a more popular character – what about Morpheus, for instance? After all, Ghost barely scrapes a mention in the cast list. Shiny boss Dave Perry explains, "The Wachowskis described Ghost as a zen Buddhist assassin, and in the game, you'll discover that he has a special relationship with Trinity. Trust me, the directors know what they're doing."

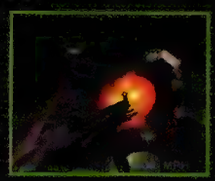
"GHOST KEEPS HIS PISTOLS OUT DURING HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT – LEADING TO DISTINCTIVE BULLET PUNCH MOVES"

ZEN IN BLACK: You can run on walls to dodge bullets.

POLICE TO MEET YOU: Grab his arm and wrench hard.

GET ME TO A HARD LINE, QUICK

There'll be three or four driving sections where Niobe or Ghost race across the city to reach a hard line. Each character offers a unique experience – Niobe's sections will play a bit like *Driver*, Ghost's like a manic version of *Silent Scope*. Expect destructible scenery, frantic collisions and a neat Focus feature – tap LB and Ghost climbs out on to the roof to fight agents.



WHO'S YOUR CABBY? The driving sections are still being worked on, so expect to see considerably more traffic than you can on the DVD footage.

PLOT KNOTS

The story of *Enter The Matrix* has been delicately intertwined with that of the film by the Wachowski brothers, so characters will step out of a scene in the game, and into the film or vice versa. The Wachowskis assure us that the game will answer a number of questions that have been posed by the movie, providing vital background to key scenes.

NET THE END: See the movie website for links to the game...

NIOBE: EXPLAINED

The Wachowski brothers don't pick character names lightly – Neo was an anagram of 'One' – and Niobe's no different. In Greek legend, Niobe rebelled against the goddess Leto and sought her own disciples. Naturally, Leto gets angry and kills Niobe's kids, causing, erm, Niobe to turn to stone in grief. Now, this isn't *that* likely to happen in the film, but we do know she plays an ex-squeeze of Morpheus. Perhaps something happens to their kids? Or could it be that Niobe doubts Neo is 'The One' and starts dissent in Zion? One thing's for sure, there's a scenario in the game where Niobe runs into Neo. Rumours aside, Niobe's a natural pilot, so her driving sections are frantic *GTA3*-style races against the clock. She's also more agile than Ghost, relying on swift hand-to-hand combat.

Will combat get stale? "We've designed it so that your average gamer could pick up the controls and start doing cool moves," explains Perry. "But a more hardcore gamer could link some combinations together. Take a chokehold – you sneak up on someone, apply a chokehold and knock them out. But if you use Focus, it becomes a neck-breaking move."

"NIOBE'S A NATURAL PILOT, SO HER DRIVING SECTIONS ARE FRANTIC GTA3-STYLE RACES AGAINST THE CLOCK"

HACK TO THE FUTURE

To boost the game's longevity, you'll be able to attach a USB keyboard and 'hack' into your character's profile, downloading new fighting moves and leaving ammunition/weapons in key locations. The hacking section will use a DOS-style command menu, so you'll be able to type words like DIR to bring up a directory of commands, or '?' for help. Hacking can be accessed from the main menu screen, and will directly re-write your memory card profile. Clues for extra abilities will be hidden throughout the game. Now, where did we leave that backflip kneebreak program?

I KNOW KUNG FU

Don't panic – despite using over 2000 combat moves, the control system will be fairly simplistic. There are three main combat buttons – kick, punch and grapple – which can be tapped in flurries to produce dazzling combos. They key word here is 'intuition' – you won't have to remember lengthy strings of key presses. Every situation will yield subtly different results, since the fighting moves are relative to the position of your foes. For example, you could tap kick to unleash a chain of attacks, before Focusing to grab your opponent's weapon, twisting them round and blowing them away from behind. The system might feel simplified to masochistic *Tekken* veterans, but the extensive motion-capture keeps you on the edge of your seat. Just watching Ghost poke a foe in the neck and swish his hands into a fresh combat stance is captivating by itself. Evasive moves are equally intuitive, so Niobe will automatically shin over knee-high benches or side step obstacles.

IT'S ONLY ROCK 'N' ROLL

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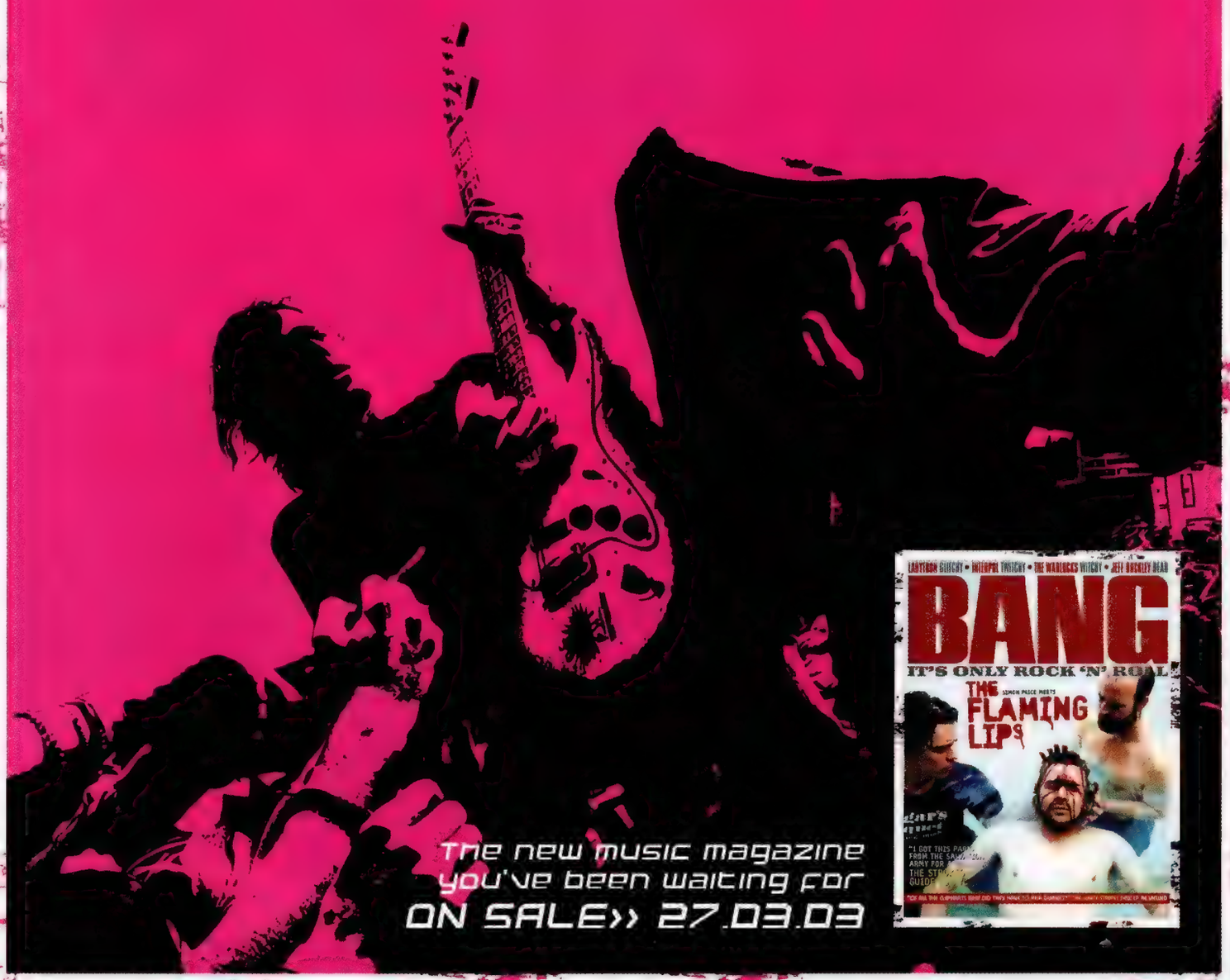

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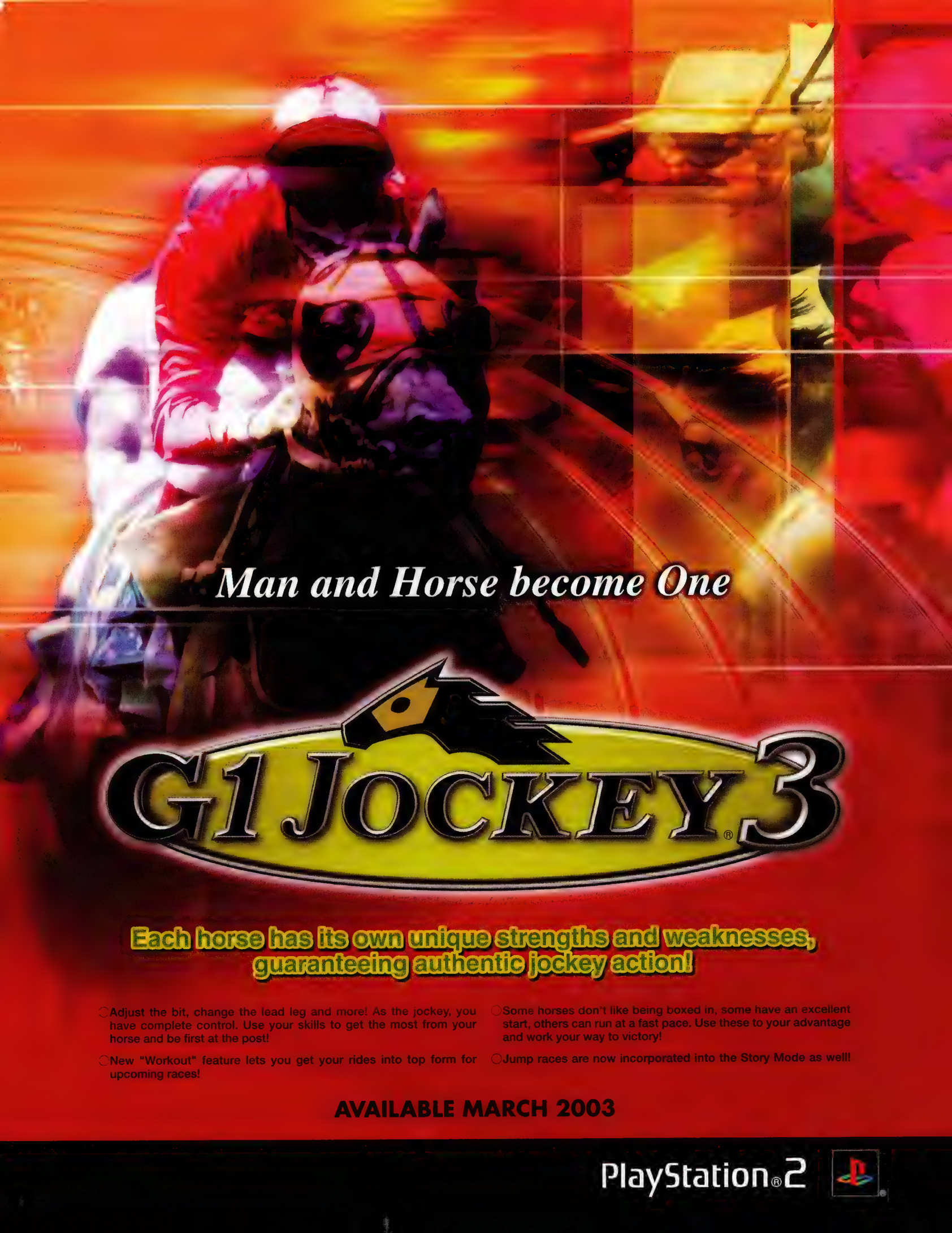

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- New "Workout" feature lets you get your rides into top form for upcoming races!
- Some horses don't like being boxed in, some have an excellent start, others can run at a fast pace. Use these to your advantage and work your way to victory!
- Jump races are now incorporated into the Story Mode as well!

AVAILABLE MARCH 2003

PlayStation®2

IS THIS PS3?*

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Multiple task parallel processing Toshiba/IBM high bandwidth CELL chip running at 4GHz – over a Teraflop of processing power.

24x CD/8x DVD Rom drive.

Rambus' Yellowstone ODR (Octal Data Rate) signal technology with a clock speed of 3.2Ghz.

Rambus' Redwood ultra highspeed parallel processor interface, 10x faster than existing processors.

1x glow-in-the-dark PS3 sticker.

* Ed's impression, see.

PLAYSTATION 3 HONEST!

Sony ignore their billion dollar global support network to unveil their top secret new console exclusively in PSM2. Yes, that's exactly what they've done.

Yes, erm. It's the exclusive story *they* all wanted, the biggest scoop since Mr Whippy contracted tonsilitis: it's the world's first pictures of PS3. Don't laugh, you won't believe how lucky we were to get these images – Sony accidentally posted them to us with a preview copy of *War of the Monsters*. Who'd have though it, eh? Not that we're interested, but as we write, Sony are confirming the tech specs of their latest console at a games conference in Las Vegas. If the latest rumours can be believed, PS3 might be a *thousand* times more powerful than PS2 and shaped like a toaster. Cynics might scoff, but even if *GT5* isn't photo-realistic, at least the disc will taste delicious with cheese and a steaming mug of tea.

Whoah, hold up. We're joking of course. Not about the toaster – natch – but about, well, the whole confirmation thing. Everything we know about PS3 is a [illegible] others granted, but a rumour nonetheless. Internet message boards have been glowing with PS3 gossip for a while now, while some magazines have even had the temerity to print pictures of a shiny VCR with joypad ports under the headline 'is this PS3?'. Now we're no rocket scientists, but we're inclined to think Sony wouldn't reveal their billion dollar top secret project to Bill Gates and the watching world in the pages of a magazine that sells 170,000 copies in the UK.

Naturally, a magazine read by more than 170,000 people every month is an *entirely* different proposition, so cast your eyes at the picture of a shiny VCR with joypad ports over the page. Yes, that's it, the one with the headline 'is this PS3?'. We've got a full list of PS3's technical abilities too, but such is the nature of making well-informed guesses, they're subject to change.

Don't worry, the picture's legit – Dan D smothered himself in baby oil and crawled two miles through a Sony central ventilation shaft to uncover the blueprint. Which seems daft really, because he could have just made it all up and asked Milf to bosh something together in Photoshop. Preferably something which looks like a bit like a futuristic VCR with joypad ports.

We've made our <adopts voice of Huw Edwards> best educated guesses for PS3 on the following page, using a pie mash of hard facts, authoritative rumours (including missives from Adrian Smith, Ken Kutaragi and the *FF10* team) plus a hefty crust of can't-fail second guesses to give you the most complete picture of what PS3 will be like that's available in the world today – this side of Ken Kutaragi's special briefcase, at least. And, yes, that does include a CD drive built like a top-loading toaster. Roll on 2005...

"PS3 MIGHT BE A THOUSAND TIMES MORE POWERFUL THAN PS2 AND SHAPED LIKE A TOASTER"

PlayStation®3

*SPIDER-MAN AND DAVID BEDDINGFIELD

ANTICIPATED FEATURES

1) **The start-up sequence begins confusingly, with the whole screen shimmering like a reflective lake, until the camera slowly pans back to reveal clips from upcoming games and flash glimpses of leading pop stars and movie icons (including Spider-Man and Daniel Beddingfield) hinting at the machine's multimedia capabilities. The camera continues to zoom out, until we make the shock discovery that the images were being projected on to the body of a small mosaic child – moonwalking over a cel-shaded Sony logo – whose head then explodes into a billion light sourced shards to the chorus of Basement Jaxx's 'Where's Your Head At?' which re-assemble as the words PS3.**

2) The new Brow3er™ menu (the equivalent of PS2's start up screen) features music from '80s synth maestro Jan Hammer. According to insider reports, the tune sounds just like Crockett's Theme, but ends with a 'dum, dum, der dum, dum de dum, dum de dum' mimicking Darth Vadar's intro music from Star Wars. Rumours that MC Hammer's 'U can't touch this' emanates from a small speaker inside the disc eject button during loading screens are totally unfounded.

"PS3 CAN BE STORED HORIZONTALLY, VERTICALLY AND UPSIDE DOWN"

3) **Sony have finally seen sense and included four in-built DualShock 2 joypad ports, backward compatible with 99% of the PS2 range including *PES2*, *TimeSplitters 2* and *GT3*.**

4) DualShock 3 – essential for at least 99% of all PS3 releases – will be available to buy separately at £19.99, with two-port MultiTaps retailing at £29.99.

5) **PS3 has a 60Gb Hard Drive, full Ethernet Broadband Connectivity and streaming pay-on-demand video playback software. Theoretically, you'll be able to use your PS3 as the mythical 'black box', to play CDs, DVDs, online games and use as a VCR. Sony's only current broadcasting partner is On Digital, giving users unprecedented access to BBC3, Sky Sports News and the Community Channel.**

6) PS3 can be stored horizontally, vertically and – get this – upside down, using two roof mounted rubber grips on the toaster-style CD tray. This invalidates your 12 month warranty, but Sony assure us it looks really cool.

HOTTEST INDUSTRY RUMOURS

MYSTERIOUS

ADRIAN SMITH – OPERATIONS DIRECTOR, CORE DESIGN, SPEAKING EXCLUSIVELY TO PSM2 (NOV 2002)

"PS2 online?... hmmm... We think PS3 will come along and trash it all [laughs]. There is more for me to say than that but I can't talk about it. I was talking with Ken [Kutaragi, inventor of Playstation] and it was online, online, online, then it was like... ooofff [holds up hand]. We don't want to be in that, we want to be somewhere else."

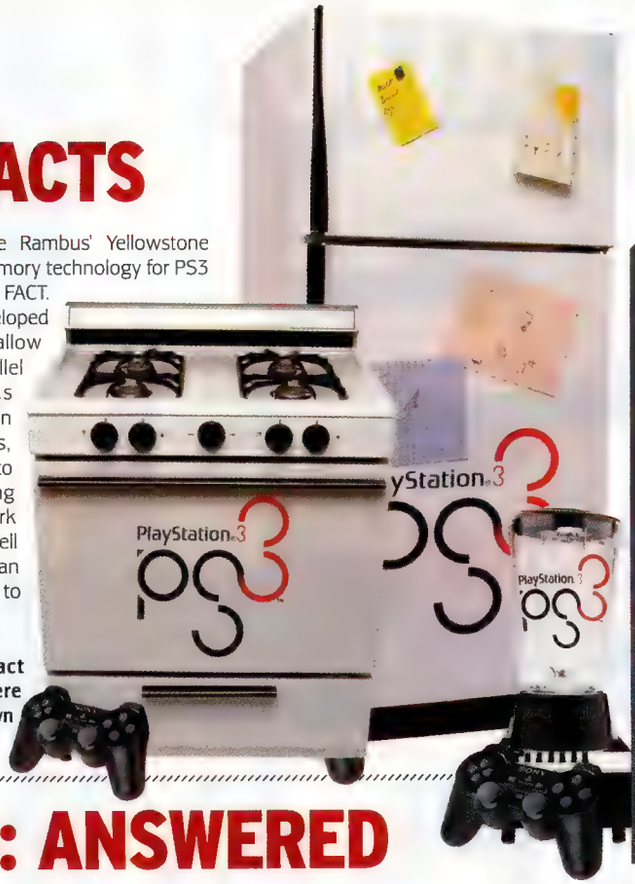
THE PERSONALITY ENGINE: EXPLAINED

PS3: THE HARD FACTS

1) Sony, IBM and Toshiba are colluding to produce a chip called the 'Cell' processor – FACT – which is *rumoured* to be the chip that's going to be used by PS3. The Cell chip will specialise in high bandwidth communication and – this is the interesting part – be able to run multiple devices. So *theoretically*, a Cell powered TV could 'talk' to, say, a Cell powered console and share the processing load, making games look better or run faster. Bear in mind, this hasn't been confirmed – or denied – by Sony, leading to Internet speculation suggesting PS3 could take the form of a toaster. The chip *is* the console, but we still don't fancy plugging our DualShock 3s into a waffle iron.

2) Reuters, the global news agency, reported that Sony and Toshiba have licensed the Rambus' Yellowstone and Redwood memory technology for PS3 – again, this is FACT. These newly-developed technologies allow ultra-fast parallel communications to occur between many processors, lending credence to PS3's long rumoured network capacity, where Cell enabled devices can work in tandem to share the load.

3) Sadly, fact fans, there are no other known facts. FACT.



HOTTEST INDUSTRY RUMOURS

INSPIRING

FF10 TEAM – YOSHINORI KITASE, PRODUCER, SPEAKING EXCLUSIVELY TO PSM2 (FEB 2002)

"As far as the hardware goes, it needs to develop so we can create images as good as the *FF* movie. In the future, we need to see a seamless fusion of gameplay, drama and visual elements – we only hope our experience on the movie will somehow influence the PlayStation hardware of the future."

YOUR QUESTIONS: ANSWERED

1) When will PS3 be launched?
Industry rumours say 2005 in Japan, Europe in 2006. This sounds sensible enough – PSone debuted in the UK in 1994, with PS2 arriving in 2000. Six years sounds like a reasonable console life cycle.

2) How much will it cost?
Just pluck a figure from the air... ooh, let's say £300-£400. Once again, let history be our guide – PSone and PS2 both launched at £299.99.

3) What will happen to my PS2?
Nothing too dramatic. Games production will continue until about 2010, slowly dropping in quality as the majority of original AAA product gravitates to PS3. Bear in mind, they're still making games for PSone almost ten years later. PS3 or not, there'll still be over 33 million PS2s worldwide. We'd be shocked if Sony didn't make PS3 backward compatible, so all your old games will still work.

4) What games can I look forward to?
No crystal ball needed here – we can easily predict titles such as *GT5*, *PES5*, *MGS3*, more *GTA* and EA's full line-up of licensing monsters. The interesting bit will be how games are delivered, and how broadband downloads may affect the production of new games.

HOTTEST INDUSTRY RUMOURS

SCARY

KEN KUTARAGI, INVENTOR OF PLAYSTATION

Talking about the potential for fully-networked Broadband devices:

"The medium for PSone was CD-ROMs. The medium for PS2 is DVDs. But once you get connected to the Internet, there're no boundaries based on physical constraint. There will be no one box called PS3. The Internet is the medium. In this world, there's no sense of capacity. And it will continue to evolve."

"MOST INTRIGUING OF ALL WILL BE HOW SONY NURTURE ONLINE GAMING"

to see what we mean. Online speaking, the console will probably be Broadband enabled, with a built-in hard drive and full multimedia capabilities – CD and DVD playback, with the option for movie, music and game downloads over the Net. Honestly, we don't think PS3 will be *that* different from PS2 – at least in terms of game genres – the big innovation this time round will be the nature of the content delivery. Most intriguing of all will be how Sony nurture online gaming on PS3, particularly with reference to controller technology and payment systems. According to Internet rumblings, Sony are forcing the first PS3 games to use Renderware-based development tools – codenamed Quasar 2 – which are allegedly "generic beyond belief". As a result, PS3 will be easy to program for, but the first wave of software will in no way reflect its true potential.

5) So what can we *really* expect?
The obvious difference will be visual. Looking at the leap from PSone to PS2, and keeping our fingers crossed, expect real-time graphics a wee bit worse than the Final Fantasy movie. In fact, take a sneak peak at *Doom 3* on a high-end PC

MAULED WHINE: *Doom 3* only runs on PCs with more power than The Terminator.

PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE

PSM2

REVIEWS

THE ESSENTIAL VERDICT ON EVERY NEW RELEASE

レビュー

SORRY, MOMMA, WE DIDN'T MEAN TO TREAT YOU BAD, JUST SPRING CLEANING OUT OUR CLOSET...

DAN

Hand me downs in the "thanks mum, Billy's flares are ace" sense of the word are a one-way ticket to an afternoon blubbing in the toliets – or, er, so we hear. But what if you could take those flares, decorate the hems with shiny gold trim and – for the sake of longevity – add a whole new button? Well, actually, they'd look crap, but you get the point. *Splinter Cell* might be an Xbox cast-off, but – thanks to a new level and freshly ironed gameplay – it's a much better fit on PS2.

Y'see, timeless garments can be modernised. For example, while that corduroy jacket makes your uncle look like a corseted hippo, put it on the right bod, and you're looking at a member of the Strokes. You've just got to learn from your mistakes – just like *Rayman 3*. Sure, he's a gallic guarantee of tweeness, but with smarter level design and some cunning puzzles, you're looking at a contender. Barrels that run away when you try to jump on them? Very post modern.

So, attention, developers. Quality endures, while shameless bandwagon jumping won't wash. Suffice to say, *Dark Angel* – a popular TV series turned beat-em-up isn't winning any friends. It's all very well striking when the iron is hot, but you've got to be pressing the right clothes.

PSM2'S MANIFESTO

PSM2's REVIEWS ARE: Analytical, delving, comic, critical, informative and, above all, bang on the money. If you want to know exactly where your cash should go, look no further than these pages.

PSM2's REVIEWS AREN'T: Lacking integrity, flabby, overly sensational, oblique and scored to appease anyone within the games industry. If you want a blinkered perspective on the global market, look elsewhere.

レビュー

REVIEWERS

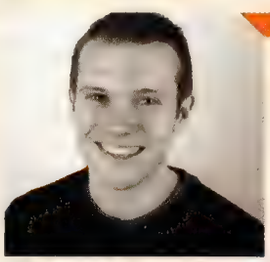
PLAYING PS2 LONGER, HARDER, FASTER THIS ISSUE:

The world's most knowledgeable and outspoken PlayStation 2 fans.

MARCUS HAWKINS

- **SPECIALIST IN:** Driving, lament.
- **HAVING FUN WITH:** Pictures of Joel

Following Review's Ed Snape's shock departure, MC spent his month shuffling CVs and arranging plastic whoopsies on Joel's empty desk while blubbing like a baby.



DANIEL DAWKINS

- **SPECIALIST IN:** Sports, reheating scraps.
- **HAVING FUN WITH:** Mystic Heroes

'Desperate' Dan's poverty merry-go-round struck a new low, when a recycling scheme involving firelighters, a can of value beans and a handful of chopped liver went horribly wrong.

JONATHAN BRYANT

- **SPECIALIST IN:** RPGs, dentures.
- **HAVING FUN WITH:** Savage Skies, Dynasty Warriors 3

Devastated by Ozzy Osbourne's late withdrawal from *Savage Skies*, Jonnie bit the head off a bat, shattering his beloved front teeth to the dismay of PSM2's cricket team.

TOM MAYO

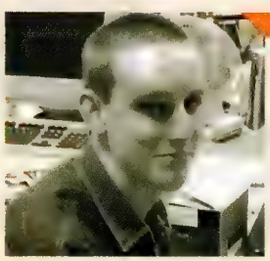
- **SPECIALIST IN:** Platformers, amputation.
- **HAVING FUN WITH:** Rayman 3

Bitterly disappointed after becoming the youngest English footballer to have his name read out wrong at Upton Park, the creamy dreamer sawed off his legs in tribute to his gallic hero.

JOEL SNAPE

- **SPECIALIST IN:** Fighting, pranks.
- **HAVING FUN WITH:** Pride, Tenchu

In a whirlpool of emotions after his teary-eyed send-off, Joel responded by dancing around the room punching himself repeatedly in the groin. No, we couldn't understand it either.



JAMES WHITE

- **SPECIALIST IN:** Staring.
- **HAVING FUN WITH:** Sum of all Fears

When James grows up, he'd like to be to the spitting image of Ben Affleck, but swears to ditch J Lo after his improvised M16 tap dancing scene was cut from The Wedding Planner.

RYAN BUTT

- **SPECIALIST IN:** Stealth, football.
- **HAVING FUN WITH:** Splinter Cell, War of the Monsters

Method reviewer Ryan responded enthusiastically to *Splinter Cell* by creeping around the games room picking up bottles, making it all the more disappointing when he strangled the security guard in cold blood.

MAIL US NOW!

E-MAIL: PSM2@FUTURENET.CO.UK

PSM2's team of reviewers play games more than any other mag. We don't shuffle through the first level, then present you with some vague mark out of five. But sometimes you won't see eye-to-eye with us. So get in touch...

PSM2, FUTURE PUBLISHING,
30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH BA1 2BW

›THE DEFINITIVE VERDICT フハワヌキニラ

WHY PSM2 REVIEWS ARE THE BEST YOU'LL READ!

We love games, but won't resist caving a shabby game's face in – stick with PSM2 to get the best buying advice around.

BEST SCREENS:
We've captured the most dynamic images from the games, with all the levels and views you need to see. They're the best shots you'll clap eyes on!

PASSIONATE OPINION:
PSM2 reviewers squeeze every ounce of detail out of a game, and tell you everything you need to know. Our reviews are as entertaining to read as the best games are to play.

IMPACT POINT:
Here you'll see the defining moment in the game that convinced your PSM2 reviewer that this is a shiny blue disc you should run out and buy or just leave on the shelf.

REVIEWS
FANTAVISION
IMPACT POINT
"EVEN WHEN THE GAME INEVITABLY FRUSTRATES AND BEATS YOU, IT'S NOT BECAUSE YOU'RE STUCK, BUT THAT YOU HAVEN'T REACTED QUICKLY ENOUGH"
VERDICT
85

VERDICT BOX:
A chunky, comprehensive summary of the game. You'll find out what the best and worst features of the gameplay, graphics, sound and lifespan are, as well as getting a score out of 100. We feel this is the most useful way of indicating the game's quality, rather than some oddball score out of, say, 30.

INSIGHT:
Here you'll find amazing facts about the game and its developers, carefully selected by the PSM2 reviewer to give you a deeper understanding of the title. Or make you laugh.

GAMER'S CHOICE:
Your essential guide to how the game compares to others in its genre. These will be PS2 games where possible, but due to the system's ability to play all your old PlayStation discs we'll also compare the new games with the classics...

ALL THE INFO YOU NEED:
Crammed with every useful fact about the game, you'll find everything here – from how many players it supports to how many levels and playing modes you can expect. For Japanese discs, we'll also give you a guide to how impenetrable the text is. Neat, no?

›HONEST AND ACCURATE シラモカ

PS2 REVIEWS

We review every last PS2 title from around the world – from Japan, America and Europe. Some of these titles that appear in an NTSC format will occasionally not make the transition to PAL and'll only be available on import for use on Japanese or American machines. Each review is clearly marked with its country of origin and, where possible, we always re-review PAL versions of games we've covered on import.

If you're looking for a review of a game that's available to buy, and it's not been included in the mag, approach it with extreme caution. Usually this means that whoever distributed it would rather you coughed up the money first and found out that it was absolute arse later. Rely on PSM2 to help you spend wisely.

›HONEST AND ACCURATE シラモカ

DVD REVIEWS

Every month PSM2 teams up with *Total Film* magazine to review the best of the month's DVDs. We treat extras as a bonus and base our scores largely on the film's quality.

›HARD-HITTING シラモカ

THE PSM2 SCORING SYSTEM:

PSM2 WARNING!

0-29	Shoddy stuff. A game in this category is so bad, *well*, it's just laughable really...
30-49	Possibly fun in the short term, but there're some serious faults in the game's design.
50-69	50 is considered 'average' in PSM2 (unlike some other mags). You can trust our scores.
70-84	An entertaining game that *just* misses out on being something big. Highly enjoyable, though.
85-89	What are you waiting for? If a game gets a score in this category, you really ought to treat yourself. You won't be disappointed – PSM2 highly recommends it, and that's the only endorsement you need...
90+	An unmissable gem which should feature in the game collection of everyone reading PSM2. It's a supreme example of its genre and pushes your PlayStation 2 in every respect. You must play this.

DON'T MISS THESE: PS2 REVIEWS

SPLINTER CELL 76
Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven 068
ISS3 072
Dark Angel 074
Vexx 080
Savage Skies 081
Dynasty Warriors 3: Xtreme Legends 081
War of the Monsters 082
Jurassic Park: Operation Genesis 084
Dakar 2 085
Mr Golf 085

PRIDE FC 86
Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc 088
Mystic Hero 089
G1 Jockey 3 089
Galerians: Ash 090
Everblue 2 091
Ben Hur: Blood of Braves 091

DVD REVIEWS
The Sum of all Fears 092
Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets 093
The West Wing: Season 2 093
Rear Window 093

OUT UK NOW

TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN

"THE WHOLE POINT IS TO KILL PEOPLE SILENTLY..."

TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN

"A HAZE OF BLURRY CLARET"

Silent but violent in the oldest of old skools, *Tenchu*'s latest outing is competing with the big boys, but it's no *Splinter Cell*. **REVIEWER:** Joel Snape

Some games are inarguably one trick ponies. That, in itself, isn't a problem – but there's a big difference between Mr Clipclop doing infant-school maths, and Zammo The Wonder Horse rescuing kids on a unicycle. It's all about a) the trick, and b) the quality with which it's delivered. See where we're going with this?

With *Tenchu*, the whole point is to kill people silently, yet with as much panache as you can muster. You dangle from a ledge, you peer around a corner, you manoeuvre yourself over that treacherously noisy water, and shupeeeen! A quick jab of ⓡ drops a samurai in a haze of blurry claret. And if you do that ten times in a single level, a brief interlude will signal that you've just gained a new ability. Some of these are a little superficial – extra combos, for instance – but others can ease your passage through the rest of the game, allowing you to, say, cling to ceilings.

Another one is a Ninja Vision move, which enables players to see, track, and throw farther.

IT'S GETTING SLATE: Use the grapple hook cleverly and you can find shortcuts to your target hit.

Early on in the game, it's easy enough to evade pursuit and come back, even when you're faced by people you're not allowed to kill. It's only with the introduction of pesky rival ninjas that things start to get really tricky.

Essentially, they can somersault and run just as well as you can, so your only hope of shaking them's in the slightly fiddly grappling hook system which you'll have to master. Even then, though, these aren't *Metal Gear*'s bullishly efficient sweep teams. They'll follow you while you're in sight, but there's no attempt to search systematically for you after you've evaded them, or even investigate a path you're likely to have taken. It only takes a few seconds out of sight before ▶

"YOU DANGLE FROM A LEDGE, YOU PEER AROUND A CORNER, YOU MANOEUVRE YOURSELF OVER THAT TREACHEROUSLY NOISY WATER, AND SHUPEEEEN!"

A third special move is a Roll attack, which is a truly excellent way to shove your enemies off cliffs and ledges. Others are almost pointless, but stupidly satisfying, like the 'feign seppuku' where you pretend to be dead. Half the time, you'll lie there faking mortal injury, and then some peasant with a halberd will decide that he's just got to make sure. Spoilsport.

Your approach affects your method of dispatch – a straight sneak results in a slit throat, but a leaping kill does the job in a far more spectacular fashion with a sword-through-the-spine job. As with *Hitman*, it's a system that rewards your stealth, though you're usually given the option to hack your way through if you so wish. One of the best new features we've discovered is the multiple paths it's possible to take through each level. They're usually tough in terms of navigation or the amount of enemies present, but a real-time map helps avoid strolling down the wrong one. Excellent.

HEART OF DARTNESS: The worst thing about the bow is once you've selected it you've got to fire no matter what.

INFO

- **CODE TESTED**
  PAL (UK)
- **DEVELOPER**
  K2
- **PUBLISHER**
  Activision
- **GAME TYPE**
  Slash em-up
- **PRICE**
  £39.99
- **ESSENTIALS**
  1 player, DualShock 2, Memory Card

DETAILS

- Three playable characters.
- Eight special moves to be earned for each character.
- Three playable characters in single-player, and 16 in multiplayer.
- Eight missions per character, three layouts per mission.
- Over 11 items to choose from, including new talents like the sticky bomb and the body grapple.

STEALTH HAZARDS

The high point of *Tenchu*'s always been the bosses, and *Wrath*'s no different. Tatsumaru, the third playable character from *Tenchu 2*, returns, as does Onikage, from the original. Then there's Jinnai, Kagura, Ganda and Kimaira, our favourite – the master craftsman with a mechanical doll strapped to his back. He's comical – yet sinister. Like Patrick Kielty. *Ha*. Joke.

WEIRD TRIMMER: Switch up to Onikage. Billy Mandon look a likey appeared for the first time back in 1998.

SKIN PALACE: Just now, if you defeat the bosses in the single player, they turn up as playable characters in the head-to-head.

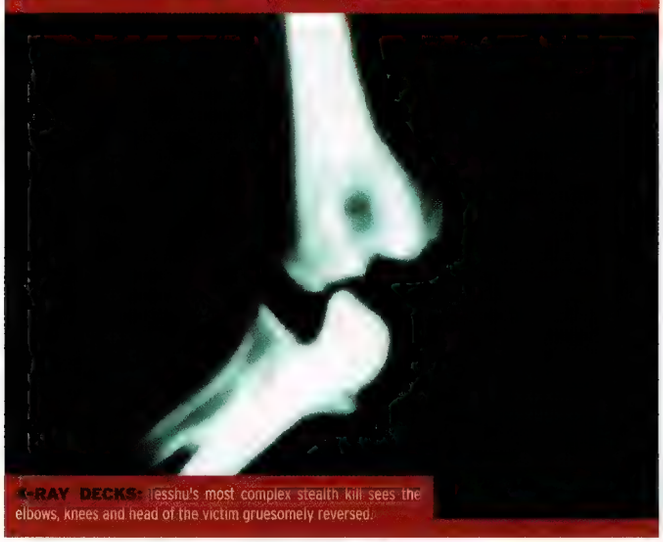
REVIEWS

THE ESSENTIAL **PSM2** VERDICT ON EVERY NEW RELEASE

A TESSHU, A TESSHU...

New character Tesshu's one of the high points of *Tenchu 3*. Once you've completed the game with Riki and Ayame, he appears, and his story interweaves with theirs. Even better, he's a doctor, which lends itself to some satisfying stealth kills. Although it's clearly ripped off from Romeo Must Die, the X-ray vision needle death still makes us wince.

DOCTOR KILL *DURR...* The puffy robe, the cropped hair, the pudgy fingers... It's a dead giveaway that this doc's up to no good...



X-RAY DECKS: Tesshu's most complex stealth kill sees the elbows, knees and head of the victim gruesomely reversed.

DEVIL MAY DIE: As the missions fall away the level enemies become harder and increasingly supernatural.

I FEEL KICK: Weird boy Onikage's a wizard with his feet.

they lose interest altogether. Double shupeeen! Cleverly, though, there are three different patterns of enemies for each level, which spices things up no end. Rikimaru and Ayame have interlocking stories – so while Riki's first mission just involves spitting a fat brothel-keeper like a pig, in Ayame's first mission, the ninja-lady discovers exactly how the events all came to pass.

Later, you'll unlock assasin/doctor Tesshu, who you can play as, and who's a specialist in needles to the dome – which is rather useful – and spends a fair few cutscenes seething as his precious bounties get offed by the pyjama twins.

Trouble is, the camera hates you. The automatic version makes such stupid decisions it seems to want you to get caught, and the fight cam's so hopelessly inadequate it'll probably kill you half a dozen times. Thankfully, there's a manual camera on R3 – but that still won't let you look up and down, so trying to sneak up on someone on a slight incline's like playing Grandmother's Footsteps in a neck brace.

TRIVIAL PURSUITS

Also, it doesn't quite have the depth you might've come to expect from other sneak-em-ups – apart from flinging a poisoned rice-cake, for instance, there's no way to entice an adversary into a killable position. You don't even leave footprints in snow, although that might be a ninja thing.

"IT DOESN'T HAVE THE DEPTH YOU'D EXPECT FROM OTHER SNEAK-EM-UPS – THERE'S NO WAY TO ENTICE AN ADVERSARY INTO A KILLABLE POSITION"

STEALTH AND SAFETY

Tenchu works on the long... period... of... doing... nothing... then doingsomethingveryfast school of play – and doesn't come a cropper because of it. Although, saying that, you might. You can't afford to faff about once an enemy turns his back on you – get in there as quick as you can, kebab his throat with a quick slice of your trusty blade, and don't be put off by his surprised squeals. Eeee!

SLICE GIRL: She might look cute, but she's a lone cold killer in baggy trousers.

TWIN LIKE FLYNN: Two-player mode's all about competitive throat-slashery.

DOUBLE AT THE TOP: Or co-operative sneakery. They're both equally good.

DIVE DOAK: It's massively satisfying to nail someone just as they yell out.

SLASH IN THE PAN: Sometimes you feel a bit sorry for them. But they'd kill you.

KNIFE 'N' EASY: There's not much you can do against this barrage of bladery.

PORCELAIN IN WAIT: Traditional Chinese dolls are always evil. Just look at *Onimusha*.

"WHETHER YOU OPT FOR TENCHU IS REALLY ABOUT HOW MUCH YOU LOVE NINJAS OVER COMMANDOES"

The grappling hook system's a clever touch, but not always terribly reliable – nudge a bit of scenery while airborne and you'll let go of the rope, which isn't helpful if you're above a chasm.

With other projectile weapons, there's no way to cancel them once you've pressed ◬ – especially annoying if you've cued up an explosive arrow for a guard who's just spotted you.

Because the environments lack the crisp, well-defined edges of, say, a tanker or military base, getting those vital stealth kills can be mortifyingly fiddly, with curvy river edges in particular leading to incriminating splashes. There's a decent enough two-player mode, where you work in tandem to fight off another clan of ninjas – shame you can't simply play through the main game, as backing each other up and distracting enemies through stealth works perfectly.

The versus mode isn't as satisfying – you dash around, you throw caltrops about, and nobody gets hurt until a) an explosion kills one player outright, or b) both players and all the NPCs converge in an astonishingly unstealthy ruck. Caltrops are arguably the best ninja accessory, but they're essentially a bit pointless, since you're supposed to be moving without trace, not just scattering sharp things about and running away.

INSIGHT

Funnily enough, the name of the game is actually tautological – because 'Tenchu', in literal translation, actually means 'Heaven's Well Deserved Punishment'. Not so clever now, eh?

Generally, it's just impossible to move with the ease and grace that characterises something like *Shinobi*. It's also a shame that the graphics never quite recapture the majesty hinted at in the very first level, where Riki sprints through a glade dappled with sunlight and buzzing with insects, plummeting off a waterfall as the closer. Everything else looks drab in comparison.

STEALTH KICK

With two other corkingly good stealth games (*Splinter Cell* and *MGS2*, natch) on the market, whether you opt for *Tenchu*'s really only about one thing – how much you love ninjas over commandoes. If you've ever done that thing where your tie an elaborate turban around your head made of a black T-shirt, this could be the game for you. Otherwise, you'll find better moves, crisper controls and more satisfying AI elsewhere. Good, but lacking the attention to detail that marks out the leaders of the genre. **PSM2**

Tenchu's already out now.

IMPACT POINT

If you complete ten stealth kills, you net a Chinese Ghost Story-ish fiery effect – a quick countdown in Japanese and a new ability. The fake-suicide move's a bit rubbish, mind.

SNEAKER'S CHOICE

1 **METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE**
Hold-ups, double-taps, shots to the groin and grumble mags.

2 **HITMAN 2**
Anaesthetic, fibre wire, a natty tattoo on the back of your neck and a snug-fitting chef's uniform.

3 **TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN**
Shuriken, grappling hooks and none of those pesky grip-meters.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ The core sneak-up-and-butcher-'em idea's sound.
- The camera can spoil things a bit.

GRAPHICS
+ Nice effects when you murder someone.
- A bit thin on details.

SOUND
+ Lovely theme music, great 'Hwuh?' noises from guards.
- Ninjaaaa! That's not helping, you clowns...

LIFESPAN
+ Surprisingly good two-player mode.
- Depends on your urge to kill everyone silently.

OVERALL
If brutally efficient sneaking and death's your bag, you're spoilt for choice on PS2. Still, if it has to involve katanas...

70

QUIET ALL RIGHT

SPLIT SCREAM: Increase your score by killing NPCs in the multi-player, then take out your opponent while ahead.

JUST TO DECAP: Look! His head comes off, and everything! Not a spot of blood, though. Strange.

OUT UK 28TH MARCH

ISS3

KAHN YOU KICK IT? The goal replays are akin to *PES2* in terms of style – watch the goal-cam shudder as you slam it home.

Konami's other football game shows its studs to *FIFA* and very nearly gets away with it...

REVIEWER: Ryan Butt

MILLS 'N' GLOOM: Replay any snatch of action in intricate detail and marvel at Danny Mills' 'close' marking.

Look, *International Superstar Soccer (ISS)* is dead, right? Since the PSone started pushing up daisies (yeah, we know it's technically still going, but when *Final Fantasy* is considered a 'hot new' release, that constitutes a dead duck in our book), the way forward, as we know only too well, is *Pro Evolution Soccer*. So why do Konami torment us? Why do they confuse matters by releasing two different football games each season when only one is needed?

It's simple really. *Pro Evolution Soccer* is the real fan's favourite. The game hardcore devotees will buy and only stop playing once the option file for the sequel is being installed on their memory cards. But 'real' football, as *FIFA* regularly demonstrates, isn't to everyone's liking. No, some gamers want end-to-end dribbles, copious amounts of one-touch passing and American Samoa scorelines. Which is why *ISS3* is here.

Admittedly, the game is a vast improvement over last year's offering, narrowly missing out on the 'Arcade' football crown to *FIFA* only by licence or lack thereof. It features a coach-load of great features and neat touches that *PES*'s future incarnations would do well to include. Stuff that could easily be taken for granted, such as an on-field ref and fully flagging linesmen are here, as are officials baring electronic number boards to display time added on and substitutes. Also featured are more natural goal celebrations and

INFO

- **CODE TESTED** PAL (UK)
- **DEVELOPER** KCEO/Major A
- **PUBLISHER** Konami
- **GAME TYPE** Sports sim
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **ESSENTIALS** 1-4 Players, Memory Card, DualShock 2, MultiTap

DETAILS

- 58 International teams, including Trinidad & Tobago!
- Player edit, team edit and stadium edit modes
- Five main modes, including Friendly, International Cup, Custom League, World League, Training, and...
- Mission mode – a selection of scenarios whereby you must overturn scorelines.
- A catalogue featuring extra strips, teams, moves and stadium pieces which can be purchased with points earned in other modes.
- Commentary by Jon Champion and Mark Lawrenson

IMPACT POINT

Bearing down on goal with only one defender to beat, you're prompted to press the ○ button. In a flash, the action zooms in on your player as you press additional commands to beat your man. Silky!

OWEN, AH GRIEVES: Turn even the most goal-shy strikers into scoring machines with the all-new defender-skinning techniques.

BELT IT LIKE BOBBY: Although the free kicks have been vastly improved, they are now far too easy to score from...

FEINT & GRIEVSIE: The player animation is superb. From blatant dives to snaking shimmies, *ISS3* looks a bit special.

brief cutscenes to show managers gesticulating angrily on the touchline and fouled players having stern eye-to-eyes with their offenders. Best of all though, you can hear the stadium announcer broadcast the scorer's name and number through the tannoy system a few moments after a goal has been scored.

Aside from your usual World League and International Cup competitions is an intriguing mode called Missions. This actually harks back to *ISS*'s SNES origins and is a series of scenarios where you enter into a raging onfield battle and must score the winner (the rules dictate how, when selecting the mission). Although they won't distract for long, the missions are a sound inclusion that do well to bolster an array of otherwise tired options.

INSIGHT

Once again, Konami's licence fails to stretch to the Dutch squad. Although in this game the team doesn't just consist of 'Oranges' (like in *Pro Evolution Soccer 2*), the names are still hideously distorted. Ruud Van Restreruy, Frick Dobuf and (Marc) Obbalmels anyone?

Staying true to its arcade game plan, *ISS3*'s gameplay has been greatly enhanced, yet the boundary between pure 'pop-a-coin-in-my-slot' outrageousness and the all-out sim-ness of *Pro Evo* is still easily distinguishable. The best example of *ISS3*'s showboating over subtlety is in the one-on-one battles between snake-hipped forwards and lumbering defenders. When you get close to the goal, pressing the ○ button when prompted will make the screen flash and a zoom-in box will appear around your player. Then, by pressing R2 in conjunction with other buttons, your attacker can feint, spin and flick the ball over the defender. Sometimes he'll guess right and the move will break down, but when it comes off you'll be the toast of the terraces and the calm slotting away of the ball is a mere formality.

But, however hard *ISS3* tries to win this match for the arcaders, schoolboy errors still hamper its game. The passing is annoyingly restricted – you can only pass to selected players in regimented fashion (there's none of the free-thinking manual passing of *Pro Evo*) – the old problem of over-animation destroying the flow is a regular occurrence and it's far too easy to score from set pieces. Of course, for an arcade title these factors shouldn't be cause for too much concern but, like Wimbledon FC's 'GO MK!' predicament, they'll stop the crowds from coming back in the long run.

If *Pro Evo 2* is the first-teamer, then *ISS3* is like its youth team counterpart – not afraid to take risks but it still has plenty to learn about conducting itself appropriately on the pitch. We'd still pole-axe it to get to *Pro Evo*, but at least we'd pick it up and say sorry afterwards. **PSM2**

'Ave it! ISS3 should be emerging from the tunnel any minute now.

"STAYING TRUE TO ITS ARCADE GAME PLAN, ISS3'S GAMEPLAY'S BEEN ENHANCED"

ARROW AND WELCOME: Thankfully, the duff golf-style power gauge of *ISS2* has been replaced by a more familiar system...

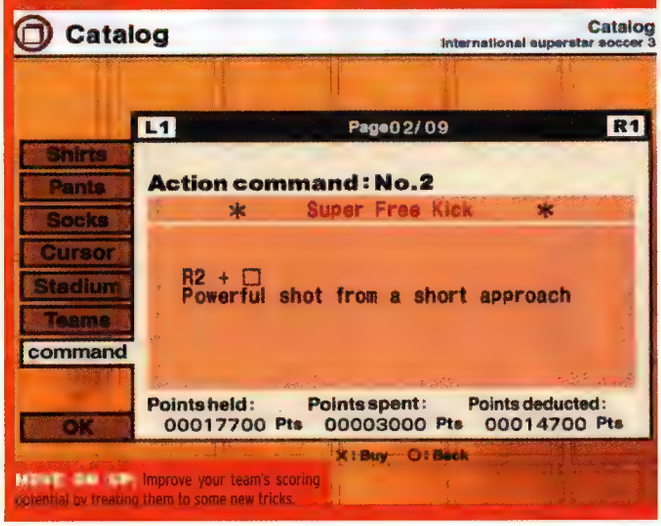
SUB STANDARD: The game features cool effects *PES3* would do well to include, like fourth officials and emerging substitutes.

IT'S A 1500-POINTER

As the big-chinned, nonsense-spouter (Bruce Forsyth – not Jimmy Hill) once dribbled, "Points mean prizes" and it rings true in the case of *ISS3*. By completing missions and any of the other major tournaments, you can earn points to spend on bonuses. Whether its extra strips for your team (the game also features a fictional teams which you can rename and build a new stadium for), secret squads or new trick moves to incorporate into the calcio carnival, there is much longevity to be had.

CUP A LOAD OF THIS: By winning tournaments and completing missions, you'll receive points to spend in the Catalogue.

STRIP SEARCH: Nineteen pages of garish new strips can be bought for your edited team.



MORE ON UP: Improve your team's scoring potential by treating them to some new tricks.

GARRINCHA'S CHOICE

1 **PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2**
Still the greatest all-round, life-consuming football game out there.

2 **FIFA 2003**
Similar gameplay to the above, but the licence is king on this star-studded pitch.

3 **ISS3**
A truly gutsy performance that shows that a Konami groundshare can work.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Easy to grasp and ultra fluid when mastered.
- None of the complex build-up play of *Pro Evo*.

GRAPHICS
+ Excellent animation and player models.
- Many of the likenesses are slightly off.

SOUND
+ Excellent crowd effects and tannoy announcements.
- The commentary is uninspired and predictable.

LIFESPAN
+ Loads to get stuck into and complete.
- Doesn't take over your every waking thought (like *Pro Evo*).

OVERALL
Altogether, it's a great little game of football – but in the arcade stakes, the licence of *FIFA* ultimately crushes its resolve.

78

DEFT

OUT UK NOW

DARK ANGEL

Cameron's fish-lipped heroine 'finally' comes to PS2. Should you be excited? Not on this evidence. REVIEWER: Rich Owen

Despite the fact that *Dark Angel* is already in the shops and *Futurama* is well on its way, neither of these titles are likely to be heralding a new dawn of games based on cancelled TV shows, however enticing the prospect of videogame versions of The Fall Guy, The Onedin Line, and Hitman and Her might be.

While James Cameron's production may have been aborted after a mere two seasons, *Dark Angel* the videogame is here nonetheless. For those who've not had the dubious pleasure of enduring this sci-fi nonsense, the plot revolves around a high kicking heroine known as Max, who just happens to be an escapee from a government sponsored experiment to create the ultimate super-soldier. Sound familiar? In this post-apocalyptic future, Max teams up with an organisation dedicated to overthrowing the tyrannical administration, and so it begins.

The action is divided between retro beat-em-up sections (very reminiscent of *The Bouncer*) and stealth-based levels that attempt to play something like *Hitman 2*. While the hand-to-hand fighting allows for a few rudimentary button bashing thrills, the stealth-based sections are less than impressive. While Max can creep, pop off shots with her stealth gun, and hang from strategically placed ledges, the camera is so erratic and unhelpful that it's virtually impossible to stay hidden from view when you're struggling to see just where the hell you're going. Granted, Max's enhanced abilities include first-person Super Vision, which gives you a free view, plus a handy zoom function, but you can't actually move in first-person mode and you can't see effectively when in third. Grrr. Chuck in an extremely harsh game mechanic that means game over when blindly straying into a searchlight beam or a guard's field of vision, and the result will have you cursing the day Cameron was born.

If Sierra had kept things simple, and played this one as a combat-based action adventure, the end result would have been far more diverting. As it is, with the action interrupted by the frustrating stealth sections, any hopes of gleaning much enjoyment from this game are left in smouldering ruins. Just like the TV show that spawned it, this one should have been cancelled too. PSM2

As you'd expect, Dark Angel is out now

"YOU CAN'T MOVE IN FIRST-PERSON MODE AND YOU CAN'T SEE IN THIRD. GRRR."

NORTHERN LIGHTS: Hitting L1 when using Super Vision fires the stealth gun. Strangely, other guards don't notice the green glow.

INSIGHT

As a nipper, Dark Angel's Jessica Alba appeared in a commercial for Nintendo. Traitor-ess.

HIGH FIRE: The game employs tired mechanics to open up new areas; cards open gates, lighters blow up fuel tanks, yawn...

INFO

- **CODE TESTED** PAL (UK)
- **DEVELOPER** Sierra
- **PUBLISHER** Vivendi Universal
- **GAME TYPE** Action Adventure
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **ESSENTIALS** DualShock 2, Memory Card, 1 Player

DETAILS

- Storyline from the TV series.
- Over 50 fighting moves.
- DVD extras, including photo galleries and cast interviews.
- Voice acting from Jessica Alba and others from the series.

PLISKIN'S CHOICE

1. **HITMAN 2** Very clever, innovative and inventive. And sadistic, too.
2. **MGS2: SUBSTANCE** Raiden and Snake make a welcome return, but this time with a whole host of enhanced extras.
3. **DARK ANGEL** So hair-tearingly frustrating, it barely even deserves a third placing alongside the likes of the above.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Plays like *Final Fight*, but with an emphasis on stealth.
- The stealth sections don't really hang together.

GRAPHICS
+ Fluid animations and smart *Matrix*-style effects.
- Camera flits around and can get on the wrong side of scenery.

SOUND
+ 'Witty' remarks from Max as she batters enemies to the floor.
- Totally forgettable in-game tunes.

LIFESPAN
+ An alternative ending gives die-hard fans a reason to replay.
- It's unlikely that anyone will bother to finish it even once.

OVERALL
Flawed stealth sections meet an old-school roaming beat-em-up. Repetitive, dull and frustrating, even fans should steer well clear.

45

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OUT UK 28TH MARCH

SPLINTER

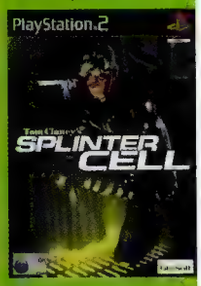
"THIS IS NO ORDINARY GAME. THIS IS THE GAME WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO BE

The best of the 'box launches on to PS2, but in a slightly more streamlined form. So is the hard cell bad for its stealth?

REVIEWER: Ryan Butt

INFO

- **CODE TESTED** PAL (UK)
- **DEVELOPER** Ubi Soft
- **PUBLISHER** Ubi Soft
- **GAME TYPE** Action
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **EXTRAS** 1 Player, DualShock 2, Memory Card



DETAILS

- Over 20 different stealth manoeuvres.
- A brand-new, PS2-exclusive Powerplant level.
- New and improved cinematics.
- More gadgets than you can throw a stick at.

Now normally, we'd tell Bill Gates to stick his cast-off games where the probes are poked. But on this occasion, and with tongues firmly bitten, we are graciously accepting the hand-me-down. Why? Because this is no ordinary game. This is (excuse the Friends styling) The One Which Is Supposed To Be Better Than *MGS2*.

Few thought that a port-over was possible due to PS2's *apparently* inferior processing power but, and this is a big 'but', unless you've played through the Xbox version, you'd swear that what you're getting is the real deal – the whole, much harped-on about, stealth-em-up to end all others – Kojima's interactive movie included. But is that really the case?

Sadly not. But let's just point out that despite this, you will still be rocked right down to your toenails by this majestically realised and impeccably presented game. From everything you've heard already to the compulsory training level that outlines the sheer immense scale of your character's stealthy scope, you know you're in for something a bit special – and *Splinter Cell* doesn't disappoint.

MORGUE THE MERRIER: Some missions require you to snare key operatives and make them squeal like colic-gripped babies.

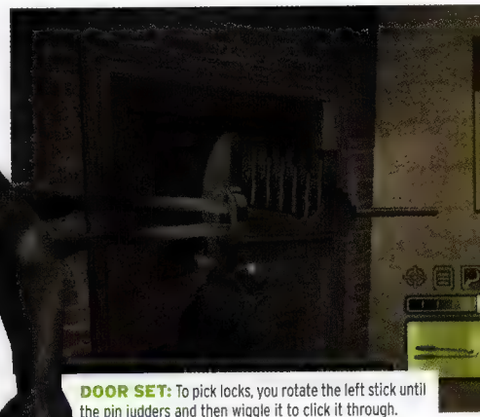
As special agent Sam Fisher, you're operating above the law to bring down the rogue president of former-Soviet Georgia who's decided to declare war on the United States. Although some might argue that the US would happily send out the B52s for only being looked at 'in a funny way' by the Commies, in this instance the country is powerless to stop the technology empowered terrorism that has been designed to bring the country shuddering to its knees from within. Well, nearly. Armed with an arsenal Wenger would balk at, you go about infiltrating various terrorist hot-spots unseen and, hopefully undetected, seizing information and then tip-toeing out, leaving only a trail of sore heads and a freezer full of corpses.

"YOU GO ABOUT INFILTRATING TERRORIST HOT-SPOTS UNSEEN, SEIZING INFORMATION AND THEN TIP-TOEING OUT"

FRESH SHIELDS: Using one guard to absorb the gunfire of another is an effective means of getting through populated areas.

As you take your tentative first steps into *Splinter Cell*'s ethereal espion world, you'll instantly notice how accessible your versatile vanguard's assortment of moves and gadgetry is. (Excuse us while we indulge ourselves here, but getting to grips with Sam's moves is so important to success.)

The analogue sticks control your movement and camera view – although the latter takes some getting used to. You'll find yourself yanking and twirling it to nausea-inducing extremes trying to get the optimum view of the proceedings while all the time having heavies breathing down your neck. The △ button is jump/drop, ○ is crouch, ✕ interacts with objects and □, when held, brings up an on-the-fly inventory that you can quickly scroll through to select weapons and equipment. Then there's the really cool stuff. ▶



DOOR SET: To pick locks, you rotate the left stick until the pin judders and then wiggle it to click it through.

CELL

BETTER THAN MGS2"

DOORS FOR THOUGHT

Only fools rush in, right? Seeing as behind every new door lurks the steely gaze of a tooled-up terrorist or a security camera, it pays to know what you're up against to be able to plan your strategy accordingly. And there are a couple of stupidly cool ways to find out what lies beyond them. What not try these when the witnesses come calling?

SPLIT DECISION: There are about five different ways to evade the guards in the police station cell block – this one being by far the most eye-watering.

▶ Squeezing the L3 and R3 buttons will press you up against walls and utilise your hi-tech binoculars respectively, holding ◎ and a direction makes you roll, pressing △ twice makes you jump up off walls (to reach higher places – yeah, we know the 'double jump' is nothing new, but seeing it used in its proper context is mightily refreshing), L1 makes you cuff choked guards into unconsciousness, and R2 draws your weapon.

There are also other little variations that have to be seen to be truly savoured – like the door peaking, drop attacks and split-jumps. The interface is so tight and user-friendly that the L1 and L2 buttons are deemed surplus to your requirements – why make it more complicated than it needs to be?

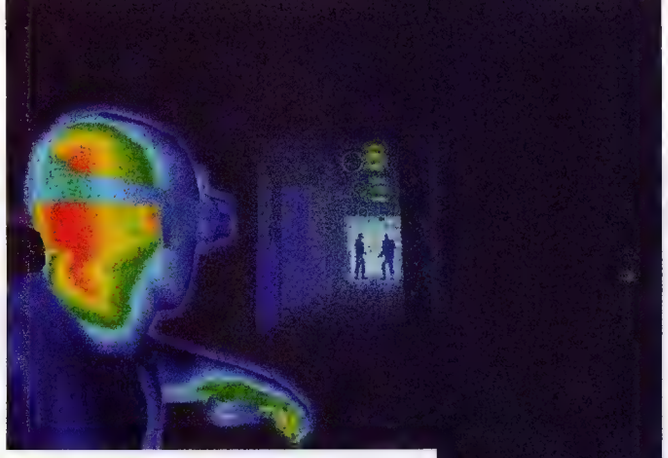
Once you've got the moves sussed, implementing them in the tense situations you're thrown into is what essentially makes this game. Like *Deus Ex*, there are several different ways to approach any given situation and, as such, you'd probably never play any mission the same way twice – which is incredible given the strictly linear level layouts. Do you simply off the patrolling guards from a safe distance? Or do you glide through the shadows, contemplating whether

TROUBLE VISION:

OPTICAL DELUSION: By threading your optical cable under the

BURNING YOUR ADVANCES: When the road is out, make sure you always look around for an alternate means to bridge the gap...

POLE IN ONE: If it looks like it can be climbed, try and climb it – follow this rule and untold unrealised stealth possibilities are revealed.



THERMOS TASK: The thermal goggles are a clever touch, but they aren't particularly practical in the tense situations.

JOIN THE DARK SIGHT: By pressing ← on the D-pad, Sam will casually flick his head forward to slide on his nightvision goggles – an essential stealth tool.

IMPACT POINT

A classic example of one of the game's heart-in-mouth moments arrives when you're faced with a descending elevator. Suspecting that it's heaving with heavies, you only have seconds to conceal yourself. But how? A quick glance up above reveals a handy beam – then, quick as a flash, you double-jump off the ramp and grab it, hoisting yourself up just as the doors ping open.

ABSEIL-UTELY FABULOUS: A proper action set-piece, you swing and crash through the window, roll, draw your gun and kill...

to drag them into a closet and knock them out or laugh in their face even more by simply leaving them to go about their business while you go about yours?

Yes, *Splinter Cell* is a gripping game which often chokes you with its style and sophistication. But that's not to say we don't have issues with it. The enemy AI, for one, is annoyingly erratic. You can be busted for emitting a small noise as you drop down from a gantry, and yet another guard may not even notice anything's amiss when you've got his mate in a strangle-hold not two metres away – and he's staring right at you...

You'll also feel gutted when you try and be too clever, double jumping up to an overhanging beam while a guard-packed elevator is about to open and then realising that you can save yourself time and effort by just hiding in the shadows a bit further down the hall. As in *Deus Ex*, you aren't directly rewarded for versatility and cunning other than getting to feel smug.

INSIGHT

When entering the underground car park to interrogate the driver in the second mission, stay well away from the cars, because their alarms will cause you to get busted and you'll fail the mission.

Sometimes though, that isn't enough. The last criticism isn't really that, just a minor quibble which we've already accepted – the levels are, at times, considerably shorter than the Xbox ones, and the means of diverting guards' attentions more limited. But, considering the otherwise outstanding conversion job, we should really just shut up.

"SPLINTER CELL IS SLOWER, MORE THOUGHT-EVOKING AND TACTICAL, BUT HAMPERED BY A REPETITIVE NATURE"

So, is it really better than *MGS2*? Eeeh, well there's no single way to answer that question. It's a bit like asking if you're rather watch Die Hard or The Usual Suspects. *MGS2* is more of a spectacle with a Hollywood pace, though perhaps a little cheapened by predictable boss battles. *Splinter Cell* is slower, more thought-evoking and tactical, but hampered by a drawn-out repetitive nature when you repeatedly fail missions and have to go through the painstaking cosh-guard-move-guard process all over again. But one thing's for sure – Hideo Kojima had better be taking notes. **PSM2**

Splinter Cell is out on 28th March. Save your money then run. Run... run like the wind

PIMPERNELL'S CHOICE

1 **MGS2: SUBSTANCE**
It didn't get as much as *MGS2*, but to have all the extras, plus the definitive action adventure is a steal.

2 **SPLINTER CELL**
As it borrows heavily from both of these other games, for it to sit snugly between them seems only fair.

3 **DEUS EX**
Similar gameplay whereby you have to make decisions about how best to tackle a level.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Amazingly in-depth and full of surprises.
- Requires a hell of a lot of patience to play.

GRAPHICS
+ Absolutely superb down to the minutest of details.
- They're still not as good as the Xbox version.

SOUND
+ Atmospheric with key changes to punctuate the drama.
- Some of the speech is muffled and hard to take in.

LIFESPAN
+ A formidable challenge with untold possibilities.
- Smaller than that *other* version...

OVERALL
The ultimate 'boys-with-toys' action adventure that makes the leap to PS2 seem effortless – even if it did have to shed some bulk to make it.

91

CELL SHADY

POSH AND VEXX: Vexx just isn't enigmatic enough to turn this into a franchise for Acclaim.

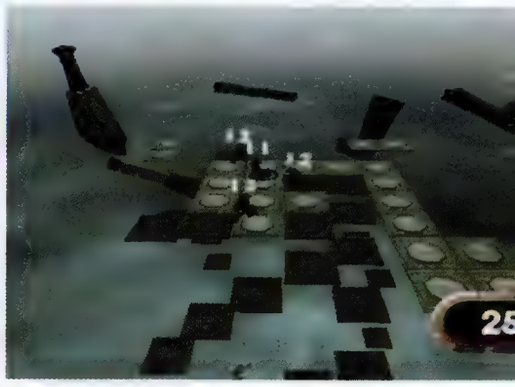
INFO

- **CODE TESTED** PAL (UK)
- **DEVELOPER** Acclaim Studios Austin
- **PUBLISHER** Acclaim Entertainment
- **GAME TYPE** Platformer
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **ESSENTIALS** 1-2 Players, DualShock 2 Memory Card

DETAILS

- 18 colossal stages, which contain stages within stages to give the impression of levels so vast you need an Ordnance Survey map just to find the middle.
- Unlockable multiplayer sub-games.
- Realtime lighting, as day crosses into night and back again while you traverse the platform terrain.
- Slightly impressive combo attacks.

SUMO THIS WILL BE MINE: Mild boss confrontations occur - this blob of blubber has to be ring-out'ed three times.



TILE BE BACK: Each world contains hidden minigames like *Breakout*-clones and these bizarre tile domination run arounds...

OUT UK now

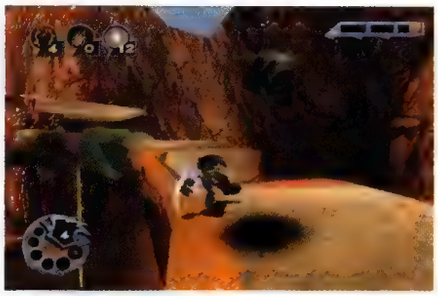
VEXX

Sent reeling after our damning preview, *Vexx* emerges as a stronger platform contender...

REVIEWER: Ryan Butt

What a difference a few months can make. When we first sunk our fangs into *Vexx* in issue #28, it was akin to Gorgonzola-flavoured mouthwash in the repellent stakes. But with our criticisms ringing in its ears, Acclaim promptly snatched back its game and went about 'fixing' it. The result is a more engaging platformer that, while still but a mere boil on the backside of games such as *Ratchet & Clank*, is nevertheless one you'll want to repeatedly scratch away at.

However, as we've mentioned before, the control system is more complicated than it really needs to be (you have to press L1 as well as ⊗ for the long jumps and combo manoeuvres) and the camera (which can be manually positioned using the right analogue) is prone to hindering your progress and getting snagged on scenery. Another cardinal sin the game commits is in the collection stakes. *Vexx* is your typical platform fare in which each level contains a set number of special objects (in this case, Wraithhearts) that must be collected in order to complete the stage, one such task involves collecting 100 Wraithheart fragments dotted around. However, should you start collecting the fragments, only to arrive at a separate Wraithheart which you then choose to collect, you will be warped back to the main hub room. Not a problem – until you realise that you have to start from scratch in the fragment collection stakes. This means that you can't just explore the levels collecting everything you see which would be natural in this type of game. Hmm...



HIT ME BA-BEE ONE MORE TIME: You have a wealth of manoeuvres to combat ground and air-based adversaries...

INSIGHT

The clue for the sixth Wraithheart mentions 'goal' and sure enough, you find a football nearby. If you score a goal with it, you get yourself a Wraithheart.

Admittedly, on face value, *Vexx* doesn't look that special. But delve deeper, and all manner of cool inclusions become apparent – like the way you can manipulate sundials to determine the time of day, and the way you can dive into fountains to reveal underwater domains. It's certainly a much-improved, less stress-inducing platformer than the bleak shell of a game that depressed us a few months back. So credit to Acclaim for bothering to pass up a quick buck in the lucrative Christmas market and persevering to ensure *Vexx* hits the spot. Just. **PSM2**

Vexx is already out now.

"CREDIT TO ACCLAIM FOR BOTHERING TO PERSEVERE TO ENSURE THAT VEXX HITS THE SPOT. JUST."

CLANK'S CHOICE

1. **RATCHET & CLANK** Big, beautiful, cunning and chocca with weaponry. Can a platformer get any better?
2. **JAK & DAXTER** Luxurious to play and captivating from start to finish. The end is a pile of old toss, mind.
3. **VEXX** None of the fluid feel as above and is unnecessarily bogged down with petty nuances.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Imaginative and varied tasks to perform on every stage.
- All that's wrong with the game may override your enjoyment.

GRAPHICS
+ The actual worlds are fantastically detailed and eye-catching.
- The central character looks like an Osbourne child.

SOUND
+ Moving, atmospheric music drones on throughout...
- But it's a bit on the quiet side.

LIFESPAN
+ With 18 gigantic levels, you'll not breeze through it.
- The playing time can be doubled by getting lost on the levels.

OVERALL
Probably more challenging than any other platform game out there, it's just a pity you can't collect what you want, when you want.

73

GRASPING

OUT UK NOW

SAVAGE SKIES

Monsters and rock ignite the skies in an orgy of hellfire and creature cruelty that would make Ozzy proud.

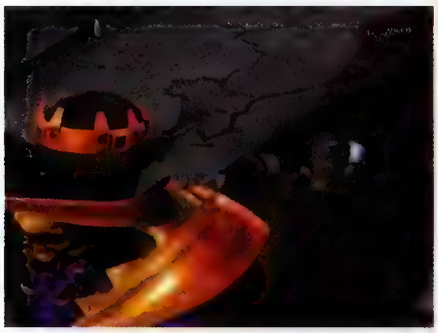
Believe it or not, but this game started out as a fantasy vehicle for Ozzy Osbourne. But he obviously came to his senses and realised that not even he, in his bat-biting heyday, would swallow a game featuring him sat astride a dragon (no Sharon jokes, please). But after several years in development, *Savage Skies*, minus Ozzy, finally has lift off.

In it, players get to blast through three different campaigns, each focusing on a different faction hell-bent on raging war on the others to gain control of the sovereignty. Each faction has eight missions (plus a secret one) and seven winged beasts. You start each mission with one beast, although that creature may not be best equipped to tackle the terrain, so backtracking is required to complete all the objectives once you've unlocked the optimum serpent.

The game plays like a more in-depth variant of Sega's *Panzer Dragoon* series. Each beast has unique handling characteristics and projectile attacks with which to evade enemy fire (both from the skies and the ground) and lock-on to targets, plus more meatier weaponry can be acquired as you swoop through the swirling lands below.

Boasting an impressive degree of depth, inviting plenty of replay value, *Savage Skies* is a decent enough *Ace Combat*-with-dragons affair, let down only by slightly shambling graphics, some ill-fitting rock music (Ozzy's influence lives on) and some way over the top narration. **PSM2**

Savage Skies is out now



CHOOSE A PRETTY BOY: There are three warring factions to select. The noble Virtwyn, the 'bad' Pariah and the ugly Chrysalis.

INFO

- **DEVELOPER** iRock Interactive
- **PUBLISHER** Big Ben Interactive
- **GAME TYPE** Shoot-em-up
- **PRICE** £39.99

DETAILS

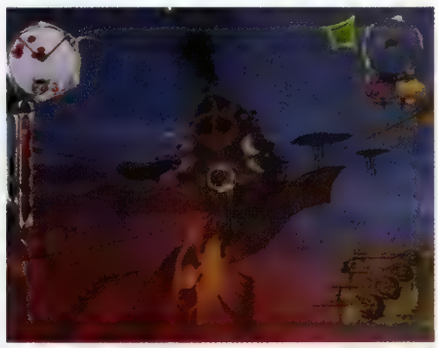
- Three campaigns, each with nine missions.
- Seven different winged beasts for each campaign.
- Three two-player modes.

OVERALL
A slightly bland but nevertheless decent enough air-based smoke-em-up that could well be worth a drag-on. Boom-cha!

67

SMOKIN'

ONE HAND FLAPPING: Mystical flying beasties in every guise imaginable dependant on which clan you align yourself with.



RADAR SHOVE: The game actually plays very much like a fantasy version of *Star Wars Starfighter*, but nowhere near as tight.

OUT UK NOW

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3: XTREME LEGENDS

All new hacking jackets for the *DW* crew but can this add-on really act as an entry point to the series?

Let's get things straight. This isn't the next instalment of *Dynasty Warriors* – you know, the one with the siege engines we talked about in Overload last month. No. This is, in fact, an expansion pack to the last game that also stands on its own. Which, effectively gives Koei two prospective markets. Either you're already a fan of the series and have followed Liu Bei and his 40 cohorts through both *Kessens* and the remarkably sh... shoddy *Tactics*. If you are, then the lure here is that you can load up all your save data from *DW3* and start the new *Xtreme* campaigns weighed down with cool stuff to hit people with.

The second type of gamers are those coming to this fresh and are hoping to find the best in the series. Well, in some ways it is. The AI of your bodyguard has been marginally improved and there's a Challenge mode to better your skills against – defending a bridge from waves of attackers a high point here. Things fall apart, though, with the fact that you can only unlock the two-player or head-to-head if you've got a *DW3* upload, or you're willing to play through 'Original' mode all over again. There's enough to get your kimono round without this, but you're probably better off opting for the earlier version. It'll give you a more complete experience and, if you exhaust all the missions quicksharp, the *Xtreme* option will still be available for a song. **PSM2**

Yup, Xtreme Legends is already out

LESS THAN HERO: Stumbling across enemy heroes during the melee is the toughest challenge you'll face.

INFO

- **DEVELOPER** Koei
- **PUBLISHER** Koei
- **GAME TYPE** Action Strategy
- **PRICE** £24.99

DETAILS

- 40 magic items for each character.
- Five weapon types per character.
- 40 epic heroes.

OVERALL
Haphazard AI and some sketchy backgrounds, but still some of the best mass combat seen this side of *LOTR*. Not bad at all.

69

CHOPPY

SPARK SLUGS: Turning the tide of the battle by using your special attacks is still incredibly satisfying.

NAG END: Dismount a hero and, if their horse is willing, you can ride it into battle and increase the damage you inflict.

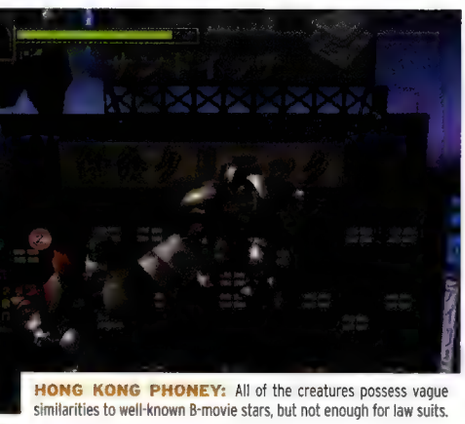
DING-KONG! With two human players and a couple of CPU drones, its four-way devastation...

OUT UK 8TH APRIL

WAR OF THE MONSTERS

Ooze a big boy, then? Intergalactic ectoplasm engulfs the world, and the ultimate monster mash ensues...

REVIEWER: Ryan Butt



HONG KONG PHONEY: All of the creatures possess vague similarities to well-known B-movie stars, but not enough for law suits.

Argh, the rage! Feel it coursing through your veins, welling up, messing with your mind and causing you to commit random acts of wanton devastation to anything and everything around you. We're not talking about what you do in the game here. A bunch of marauding muties reducing cities to rubble, impaling each other with TV masts and playing rounders with the odd tank or two? Nah. We're just remarking on how this does for anger management what Bin Laden does for world peace. No. Be controlled. Review to write. Fit over, calmness restored, we pick up the pad and resume playing Sony's beast of a beat-em-up...

Like the similarly themed *Rampage*, that classic three-player coin-op featuring a trio of oversized monsters tearing cities apart, the main problem with *War of the Monsters* is that there's just too much going on to get your head around initially.

Opting to play as one of eight B-movie style beasts (although 150ft Woman is conspicuous by her absence), the game's main Adventure mode plonks you straight in the middle of a metropolis with the military unleashing hell all around you, and a rival beast or beasts in need of a sound shoeing. The first problem you encounter, which will send your blood pressure soaring skywards before long, is the amount of punishment you endure within seconds of starting the stage. You target your rival (holding L1 and R1 will lock you on) and start to give chase, only to be flambéd by

INFO

- **CODE TESTED** PAL (UK)
- **DEVELOPER** Incognito Inc
- **PUBLISHER** SCEE
- **GAME TYPE** Fighting
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **ESSENTIALS** 1-2 Players, DualShock 2, Memory Card

DETAILS

- Eight playable monsters (plus two unlockables).
- Four different skins for each monster.
- 13 destructible levels to rampage through.
- Two-player split-screen in a multitude of modes.

IMPACT POINT

Be amused (and then, before too long, very annoyed) by the way in which hurled radio masts skewer midriffs, causing your beast to go ape trying to pull them out. A nice touch, but an all-too frequent occurrence.

ASTON 'ZILLA: Each mutant has a multitude of combat moves, but the animation of their execution is very suspect...

heavy artillery from behind. You then turn around to trample your titchy tormentors only to get set upon by the creature you just took your eyes off. So then you're reduced to helplessly flailing your limbs trying to retaliate while being knocked from pillar to post, with your energy bar depleting faster than Jacko's bank balance in a gaudy Vegas tat emporium.

You can block by holding the R2 button, but if you were to successfully employ this tactic then you'd spend the entire duration of the game cowering in the foetal position while the armed forces and the monsters take it in turns raining blows on you. No, the best form of defence is to attack, attack attack! Gradually, as you get into the swing of things, the aggression that consumes you can be unleashed on just about anything. Unlike *Rampage*, where your sole aim was to break as many buildings as possible, the demolition in this case serves as a satisfying side-quest. You can punch the buildings into oblivion and use the rubble as weaponry, or you can simply hurl your opponents straight through them.

INSIGHT

As you'd expect, coming from the makers of *Twisted Metal: Black*, there are several cross-game references to be found here. For instance, you can see Crazy 8, Road Kill, Shadow and Yellow Jacket in the intro and, get this, if you have a *TM:B* game save (with Sweettooth completed), you'll be able to unlock an extra Sweettooth-inspired skin for Agamo.

On some levels, flattening buildings can also be tactical, as it will trigger environmental effects – like in Baytown, where the demolition of key buildings and foliage will result in an earthquake, causing gaping chasms to open up and suck your disorientated opponents in. Likewise, in Tsunopolis, you can trigger a tidal wave by angering a nearby UFO. As you'll soon realise, to overcome your adversaries and progress to the next city, you'll need all the help you can get.

Without on-screen energy bars to display the fitness of your foes, it's hard to adopt any particular strategy, but generally using anything that comes to hand as a weapon generally works. As well as straightforward combo attacks, you can utilise any (and we mean ANY) object at your disposal as a weapon. Radio masts can be used as makeshift javelins to skewer your opponents (rendering them temporarily helpless), the aforementioned rubble can be hurled, and even tanks can be used as simple projectiles or, by improvising and pressing the ○ button, guns. The game presents a truly satisfying picture of destruction but gradually the appeal wanes.

CREEPING MUTEY: Unless you stay locked-on to your opponent at all times, you're likely to get ambushed...

HOUSE INVADERS: Other mutants, the military... even ETs get in on the act of kicking your 60ft hide.

SUPER MONSTER BALL

As the various multiplayer modes all seem to blend into the same theme of straightforward slugging it out, you can unlock additional minigames to add more variety. The trouble is, they all appear to have been 'borrowed' from *Super Monkey Ball* on the Gamecube...

Overall, the graphics are functional rather than fetching, and the response of the controls sometimes leaves a lot to be desired, which obviously won't do much to improve your mood. But the lasting impression of *War of the Monsters* is that, yes, it's a well-conceived, often enjoyable throw-away game, but certainly not one you'll be moving mountains, or indeed office blocks, to come back to in the future. **PSM2**

Grrroar! Out on 8th April. Grrr.

MOTHRA'S CHOICE

1 **TWISTED METAL: BLACK**
Faster, destructive gaming doesn't come much sweeter than at the hands of Sweettooth and co.

2 **WAR OF THE MONSTERS**
Mindless destruction on a massive scale, but appeal is limited.

3 **ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY**
It's got the plot and sophistication, but the production values of Robocop 3.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Instantly gratifying ultra-devastating appeal
- Often infuriating, and the appeal soon disintegrates

GRAPHICS
+ What they lack in detail they make up for in devastation.
- Rather basic animation and drab cutscenes.

SOUND
+ Excellent B-movie-inspired disaster music.
- The sound of falling masonry soon hassles your ear drums.

LIFESPAN
+ Extra modes and character skins to unlock.
- We're talking weeks (maybe a week) rather than months.

OVERALL
The annoyance cancels out the fun – it's a game that, unlike the mutant-damaged landscapes, fails to leave any lasting impression.

69

STOMPING

OUT UK 21ST MARCH

JURASSIC PARK OPERATION GENESIS

Not a doomed mission to revive Phil Collins' dinosaurs of dad rock. Thankfully. **REVIEWER:** Lee Hall

Cynics will probably dismiss Vivendi's Jurassic Park tie-in as a mere *Theme Park* clone, which is, to be honest, understandable: the premise is similar – your task here is to draw visitors to your newly erected park to view the dinosaurs (sadly, not to ride the rollercoasters), that have been genetically reformed from unearthed DNA.

QUENTIN TARAN-DINO: When dinosaurs attack, pull out your trusty blunderbuss and 'retire' them, as it were.

Like the *Theme Park* games you must pander to the needs of over-payin guests, developing new breeds through excavations and picking up fossils on the surprisingly vibrant secondhand market. You'll also need to research the traditional bevvy of amenity upgrades such as burger bars, toilets and rest areas to placate weary visitors.

This being a dinosaur theme park, however, you'll also need to invest in shelters, balloon rides, high security fences and sentry turrets to achieve the hallowed five star status which nets victory in the *Operation Genesis* park development mode.

Still sounds a bit like *Theme Park World*, you say? The real twist is that you take a very hands-on role in the park. If a dinosaur is sick you can hop on a chopper (which works like a fixed floating camera), switching to first-person mode to fire darts at poorly carnivores before healing them with researched vaccines. You can even leap in a jeep and blast around spying on the dinosaurs in the environment you created, eating the defenceless cows you provided for them on the land you flattened.

A brilliant musical score, decent graphics and excellent dinosaur AI create a brilliant wow factor that makes the first few hours of gaming truly memorable. The first time you create a couple of large spiky flesh-chewers and watch them battle it out for territory is awe-inspiring. But you're soon looking for new challenges.

The Mission mode provides a string of extra assignments, ranging from rescuing downed colleagues to herding herbivores into a safety pen, but these are only diversions to the main game. The Park Creation mode remains the primary focus of the game. And if you like this sort of resource management affair you're no doubt the sort of person who'll seek depth and longevity in this centrepiece mode. Sadly, that's exactly where *Project Genesis* falls down. It's therapeutic, but short-lived. **PSM2**

And it's also out on the 21st March

INSIGHT

CLAM FACT! The humble cockroach has existed on Earth in its present state of evolution for 300 million years. Which is nothing compared to the not-so-humble, record-holding clam, which has been hanging around for 500 million years. Show off.

DR GRANT'S CHOICE

1. **THE SIMS** The ultimate in user-friendly management games.
2. **THEME PARK WORLD** The most recent *Theme Park* title. Has spawned many imitators but has rarely been bettered.
3. **JURASSIC PARK: OPERATION GENESIS** Enter Vivendi's latest offering – a classy, but short-lived management sim.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ A well-designed, easy-to-use game. And surprisingly enjoyable.
- Even with the extras, there's not enough to get stuck into.

GRAPHICS
+ The illusion of a living, breathing dinosaur park isn't broken.
- When the storms kick in you can't see what the hell's going on.

SOUND
+ A couple of licensed tracks and an atmospheric filmic score.
- The chirpy, repetitive exclamations of your advisors soon grate.

LIFESPAN
+ You could while away hours fine-tuning your park....
- ...but once you have there's little left to do in the main game.

OVERALL
Ideal for the casual player looking for an instant chill out. Dig deeper, however, and you're left scrabbling through a pile of bones.

61

DINO-SORE

INFO

- **CODE TESTED** PAL (UK)
- **DEVELOPER** Blue Tongue
- **PUBLISHER** Vivendi
- **GAME TYPE** Resource Management
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **ESSENTIALS** 1 Player, Memory Card, DualShock 2

DETAILS

- **Park building mode and 12 extra missions.**
- **Dual playing mode – manage the park and play action sections.**
- **Licensed music from the films.**

OUT UK NOW

DAKAR 2

Case 1358: The people versus a brown driving game with an unpopular licence. Jury, to your seats please...

Listen *Dakar 2*, we're going to give you a chance to defend yourself, OK? Let's consider the case for the prosecution. *Dakar 2* is an unbearably average driving game with a cut-price licence designed to appeal to insatiable car nuts. How do you plead? Come on...

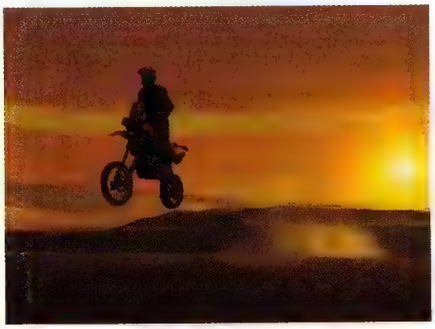
Erm... hold up... I've got the Paris Dakar rally licence – you can drive a 4x4, truck or motorbike on the trip from France to Senegal – plus, there's over 600 licensed racers and 12 stages and... and... Go on, take a breath *...the graphics are speedy, there's virtually no pop-up and we've included lots of effects like lens flare, and mud that sticks to the car, plus that rain effect where droplets splodge the screen, and...*

We'll stop you there. Eye witnesses complain that they've seen it all before, the tracks are empty and the loading times poor. Worse, it's all a bit brown, the bike handles like an RC model and you can't spill the trucks. Despite intuitive arcade handling, punchy counter-steering and tense-ish time-trials, it's all a bit... well, dull and formulaic.

Your honour, what about the Multiplayer mode, Replay Theatre and adjustable gear ratios? The Quick Race and Time Trial options?...

Sorry, *Dakar*, the verdict's in. We're sentencing you to three weeks at full-price, before a lengthy stretch in the bargain bin. Any last requests? *Sniff... one last go of* Colin McRae 3*?* Honestly, *Dakar*, try thinking for yourself. Next generic driving game to the stand... ple-ase. **PSM2**

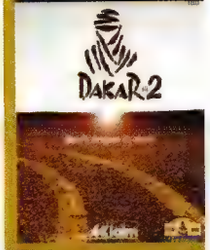
Well, it's out now 'innit



DUNE AND DUSTED: The bikes make a refreshing change from the clunky trucks, but the handling's just too floaty light.

INFO
- **DEVELOPER** Acclaim Cheltenham Studios
- **PUBLISHER** Acclaim
- **GAME TYPE** Racing
- **PRICE** £39.99

PlayStation 2

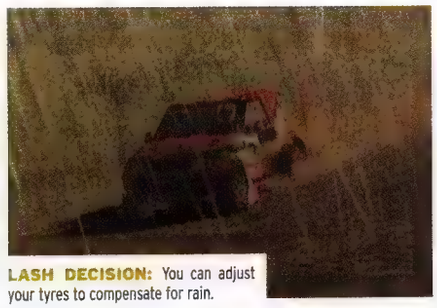


DETAILS
- Choice of over 600 licensed racers.
- 12 stages.
- Varying weather conditions.

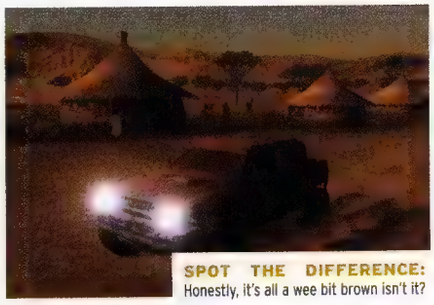
OVERALL
Will sink like a stone in an ocean of superior competitors. One for Clarkson-esque obsessives only, who'll get what they deserve.

50

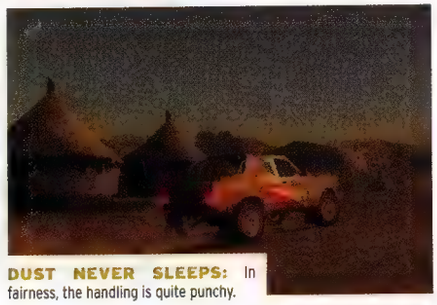
TYRE-SOME



LASH DECISION: You can adjust your tyres to compensate for rain.



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE: Honestly, it's all a wee bit brown isn't it?



DUST NEVER SLEEPS: In fairness, the handling is quite punchy.

OUT UK NOW

MR GOLF

Fore-gettable? Not quite, but if we had to putt a finger on it, this isn't as good as *Everybody's Golf*.

No surprises here. The 'Golf' bit speaks for itself, while the only people who use the word 'mister' are freckle faced five year olds tugging at the trousers of kindly policemen, so you know what to expect. Think *Tiger Woods 2003* for wee bairns – bright, well-intentioned but confusing.

Things start cheerily enough. The menus are fronted by air hostesses, with, naturally, a girl in a chicken suit narrating the Tutorial mode. But here's the catch – the underlying mechanics bely some serious adult thought. Strip away the aesthetics and you're left with something a bit too grown up for its own good.

On the bright side, the shot system's been culled from *Tiger Woods 2003*. Pull back on the right analogue to swing the club, and push it forward to belt the ball. Problem is, *Mr Golf* complicates matters by introducing club selection, ballspin, draw and fade – which may upset folk more comfortable with Clifford the Big Red Dog. Worse, it took us 36 attempts to make a slice putt before... well... giving up. There's no targeting line and the positioning's ruthless.

Quibbles aside, it's perfectly-playable, but lacking the authenticity and depth of *Mr Woods*. There's only two game modes, four courses and six characters. Spookily, one of the caddies sounds just like Bob the Builder – appropriate for such a workmanlike piece of kit. **PSM2**

You can tee off right now

CADDIE GOT THE CREAM: Each golfer has their own unique caddie, like this wizened Mr Miyagi look-a-like. Handy.

INFO
- **DEVELOPER** Artdink
- **PUBLISHER** Midas Games
- **GAME TYPE** Golf
- **PRICE** £29.99

PlayStation 2

DETAILS
- 1-4 players.
- Four courses, playable in spring or autumn.
- Two game modes: Stroke and Match play.

OVERALL
A competent golfer stranded between adult depth and childish glee. Compared to *Tiger*, *Mr Golf* can't see the woods for the twees.

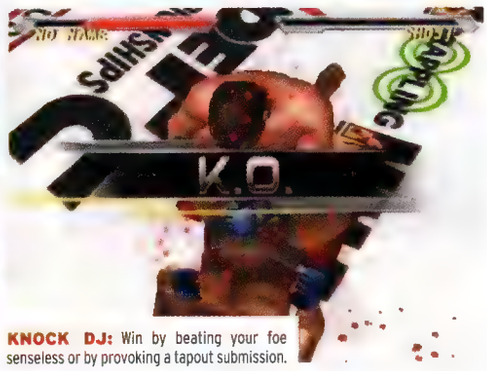
56

TEE-DIOUS

SWING AND A PRAYER: The core gameplay is skillful and rewarding, making allowances for wind speed and ground conditions.

HARRY PUTTER: Lining up putts is difficult since there's no targeting line - you've got to rely on intuition and guesswork.

KING OF THE RING: Your job is to win by any means necessary. We challenge you not to grimace at some of the moves.



KNOCK DJ: Win by beating your foe senseless or by provoking a tapout submission.

OUT UK now

PRIDE FC

Not the face! Well, actually, it hardly matters either way.

REVIEWER: Joel Snape

Here's the thing. We don't like to think our values have been warped by games – but, dammit, when we're playing a game about the most violent sport on Earth, lured in by the promise of sitting on someone and punching them in the nose until they weep pure fat, we want to *mash their face into hamburger*. Is that so wrong?

Pride lures you in with an intro reel full of hurt. No gouging, no biting; just kidney stomps, guillotine chokes – even the dreaded Mongolian chop features heavily in clips of people getting some Tyler Durden-style rhinoplasty. This highlights the most impressive feature of *Pride* – every memorable move used in the tournament's been included, right up to Kazushi Sakuraba's cartwheels. As with the earlier *UFC*, they're slotted together rock-paper-scissors fashion – counter beats punch, punch beats grapple, grapple beats counter. This affects the pacing of a match according to the relative skills of each combatant. For novices, takedowns and strong kicks can feel a bit sluggish, so matches tend to degenerate into jab-fests. A novice against a more experienced opponent might seem to take the upper hand, just as in the real thing – but mashing the buttons and constantly throwing out strikes makes you hugely vulnerable to a well-timed counter and submission move. With two equally skilled opponents, strategy comes to the fore – it's here that subtleties like feints come into play, as you can't risk being caught unawares. Though it's present in *UFC*, the ground-fighting element's impressive here, making it entirely possible to win a fight from your back – or conversely, to do a jumping stamp on an opponent's face. Even then, every move can be countered in a realistic way, all the moves superbly balanced in risk and reward. Ground grappling's initially the most bewildering element, but relies on the same combination of energy, ability and timing to pull off a submission move. The elegance of the system is its context-sensitivity – an opponent moving *into* a roundhouse is likely to be swatted to the ground – married to shuddering weighty impacts.

"MASHING THE BUTTONS MAKES YOU VULNERABLE TO A WELL-TIMED COUNTER"

The problem remains, however. You're sitting on someone, you're dishing out damage, even the camera's spattered with blood – and it isn't hurting their face. You can't underestimate the importance of this – in a close-fought game of *Rocky*, the loser gets some dignity from the bruises on his enemy's face. In *Pride*, everyone stays Action Man perfect throughout.

INFO

- **CODE TESTED:** PAL (UK)
- **DEVELOPER:** Anchor
- **PUBLISHER:** THQ
- **GAME TYPE:** Beat-em-up
- **PRICE:** £39.99
- **ESSENTIALS:** 1-2 Players, Memory Card, DualShock 2

PlayStation 2

DETAILS

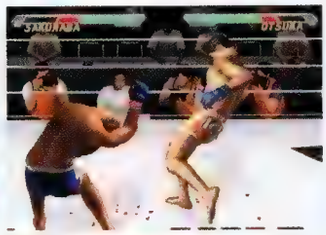
- 25 fighters, including Kazushi Sakuraba and Vanderlei Silva.
- Multiple fighting styles.
- Create-a-Fighter.

IMPACT POINT

One man's on the floor, and the other one's standing. The advantage would be clear in the carpark of the Lamb and Trumpet, but a trained jiu-jitsu man's likely to shatter your kneecaps if you get overconfident from this position.

NADGER WATCH: Get your opponent on the ground, back him into a corner, then stamp on his family jewels. Laaarvely.

RULE-R LENSKA: There are few rules in *Pride*, but you can tweak them as required.

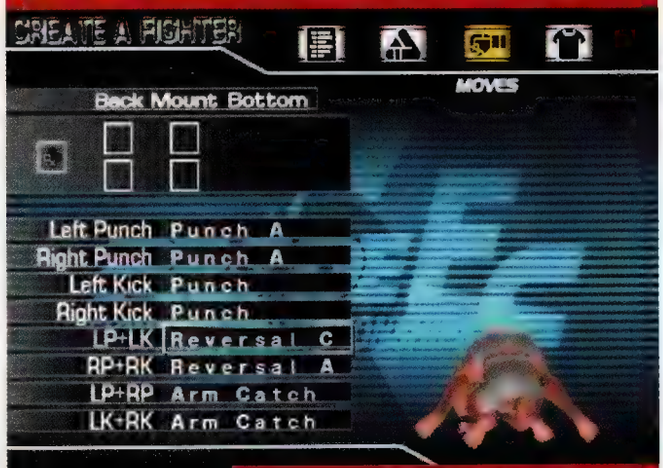


SPLAT BOY SLIM: There is blood in the game, but this is no *Mortal Kombat* gore-bath.

FRYE ANOTHER DAY: This pair would normally never clash, but in the game you can make any match-up a reality.

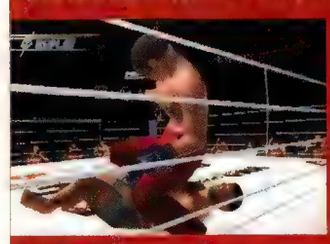
IN THE RED CORNER

Standing at a mere 5'7" in his socks, yet with a six-pack that's astonishingly true to his real-life counterpart, miniature Joel's yet to win the *Pride* fighting championship. Could that be because we assigned all his combos to flashy – yet ultimately worthless – high kicks, and he hasn't got any grappling ability at all? Perhaps.



ARSE AND WENGER:

SOLID SNAPE:



YOUR FACE OR MINE? Mini Snape gets up close and personal with his opponent.

FIGHT FEVER: Joel celebrates his victory with his customary experimental dancing.

"AS A BEAT-EM-UP, PRIDE'S PONDEROUS, YET IMPRESSIVELY STRATEGIC"

You're also constrained by the main event. The game proper takes the form of the Grand Prix – 16 men entering a knockout tournament. Win four fights, and you're *Pride* grand champion. There's no option to enter another season as defending champ, so your only real option's to do it again, except with a different character.

Real Pride events often see fighters lay down impromptu challenges, wrestling-style, and forthcoming bouts are worked out based on recent form – here, there's no way to even keep a record of who's beaten who. It's even more distressing thanks to the comprehensive Create-a-Fighter mode. It's entirely possible to make a model of (say) yourself and (say) give it all the moves you can do in real life, then pit it against a seven-foot kickboxer and (say) get your head kicked in. This is the only way you'll see some of the game's spectacular moves, as there aren't many Pride veterans who count the Chi Blast or Meia Lua De Compasso in their repertoire.

As a beat-em-up, *Pride*'s slightly ponderous, yet impressively strategic. As a knockabout, it's ruined by the lack of pulpy face dynamics. As a game, it's not for everyone – Pride vets will appreciate the amount of detail, but everyone else'll probably find it impenetrable. Next time you're making a game about sickening violence, Anchor, don't forget to include some. **PSM2**

Pride is already in the shops now.

BRUISER'S CHOICE

1 **ROCKY**
If you're going to biff people in the noodle for ten minutes, it always helps when they look like a smashed cow afterwards.

2 **PRIDE FC**
Grr... argh. And so on.

3 **ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP**
Exactly like *Pride*, only slightly less good. And with a big cage instead of ropes.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Multi-layered balance of ground and standing scraps.
- Moves feel unresponsive to beginners.

GRAPHICS
+ Excellent fighter likenesses and smooth animation.
- We want to break someone's *face*. How hard is that?

SOUND
+ Spot on – right down to the ref's pre-match banter.
- Well, it's not realistic, but how about an, "Ow! My arm!"

LIFESPAN
+ Solid Create-a-Fighter system.
- Four bouts isn't a career. Neither is Survival mode.

OVERALL
Technically solid, marred by the fact that Carlos Newton looks presentable enough to christen a newborn baby after a three-round war.

75

HEFTY

INFO

- **CODE TESTED** PAL (UK)
- **DEVELOPER** Ubi Soft
- **PUBLISHER** Ubi Soft
- **GAME TYPE** Action Adventure/ Platformer
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **ESSENTIALS** 1 Player, Memory Card, DualShock 2

DETAILS

- Over 20 types of enemy.
- Five different powerups to collect on your way.
- Five realms to explore; the Fairy Council, Umber Swamp, Moor of Mad Spirits, Hoodlum Meddleworks, and the Forest of Clear Leaves

OUT UK NOW

RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC

One of a handful of PlayStation 'stars' is back in his most accomplished endeavour to date.

REVIEWER: Tom Mayo

Platformer fans rejoice! Although having said that, Ubi Soft are describing *Rayman 3* as an 'action adventure', possibly to avoid the negative connotations of the platformer tag. Namely, that they have many many diabolical moments of joypad crushing frustration. We never shout or swear at the screen. It seems so pointless. But more than once we said some very bad words, as Rayman floated inches away from a ledge and sailed to the floor, only to have to make a wearisomely familiar series of jumps from giant mushroom to giant mushroom all over again.

It's the one thing you'll have to get used to, playing a game like this. But the crucial factor is how much it's your fault for simply misjudging it, and how much it's the fault of the coders for being fools. Aside from some awkward camera issues, you largely have only yourself to blame, here.

Rayman 3 is, undeniably, a beautiful game. The environments are lush and detailed – more so than ever before. The animations are no less impressive, making another bouncy step towards the bona fide interactive cartoon that it's trying to become. And, in keeping with the current trend, some star voice talent's been recruited. John Leguizamo (Luigi from the Super Mario Bros movie) stars as the big dumb Globox, and Billy West (Fry from Futarama) *is* Murfy the wise-cracking frog.

BUNCH OF POWERS: Just one of the five power up cannister things - this one will let you fire, and even steer, powerful rockets.

INSIGHT

Groove Armada's Madder accompanies the demo that kicks in if you leave the game alone. The press release explains it as "rambunctious dub-hop funk-rock tune". Well, quite.

BOSS A NOVA: The first boss is essentially a little chap in huge wooden stilts - rockets are the way forward, but have limited lifespans.

POW! ZAP! URK! Pleasing Batman-style cartoon exclamations appear over the evil Hoodlums when you smack them with your fists.

BLAM AND BLAST: Rayman seems unperturbed at being shot in the face. In the game, you get a period of invulnerability after a hit.

Importantly, *Rayman* also *plays* well. Less is more, as Ubi Soft prove by essentially having the game playable with just two buttons – ⊗ to jump, and ○ to fire. The strategy comes in when you pick up one of the five costume change/power up icons – and finding a quick route to them so the power doesn't run out forms the crux of most of the game's puzzles. There are lots of unlockables, including some animated shorts, and you're told what percentage of a level you completed, so you can keep replaying. If you can curb your temper when you fall off a platform time after time, *Rayman* will provide hours of entertaining gaming. **PSM2**

Rayman 3 is already out now

LIOTTA'S CHOICE

1. **RATCHET & CLANK** It looks like this duo is going to be top of the leaderboard for some time to come...
2. **HAVEN** All games in one, so the blurb went. Quite a lot of platform adventure malarkey.
3. **RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC** Lots of replayability, loads of hidden goodies, fantastic graphics - but not as great as the above.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Easy to get to grips with and simple controls.
- The major problem is the camera which can be your downfall.

GRAPHICS
+ Pretty damn good in any area you care to name.
- No major quibbles, unless you despise cartoony graphics.

SOUND
+ A decent track by Groove Armada, and good voice acting.
- The rest of the music isn't terribly memorable.

LIFESPAN
+ Getting 100% on each level will take lots of time and effort.
- If you are quick to anger, you may find yourself switching off.

OVERALL

Ubi Soft haven't really put a foot wrong with this, the third in the series. Addictive, frustrating, but invariably fun, it's a class act.

80

JUMP AROUND

OUT UK NOW

MYSTIC HEROES

Yes, it's a land of mystical forces, magical runes and silly hats, but you'll be too busy whacking people to notice.

Look, we know you're busy, so if you've already read pg81 – y'know, the *Dynasty Warriors* review – then go and make yourself a self-congratulatory cuppa safe in the knowledge that this is almost *exactly* the same, but spun through the Manga-nator (patent pending) for people with severe reality aversion. Yes, it's time to choose from one of four bug-eyed heroes with enhancable stats to whack a horde of advancing clones as the background fogs three metres into the distance under severe technical constraints.

FLAME ACADEMY: Whack foes to build your magic bar - see the bottom left - and unleash lethal *Matrix*-style special attacks.

INFO
- **DEVELOPER** Koei
- **PUBLISHER** Koei UK
- **GAME TYPE** Strategic combat
- **PRICE** TBC

DETAILS
- Four playable characters.
- Eight stages.
- Over 70 magical rune spells and attacks.
- Seven different co-op and versus modes.

Characters? Lani's the fast but weak skinny 'un with magic, Tai the plodding powerhouse and Shiga the all-rounder with a funky headband. You just plow into the Story mode mashing goons until the enemy retreats. The controls are tight, with individual buttons for projectile and close range magic, with a series of twirly evasive rolls and pad mashing combos. Intuitive is the word, as you slam a jumping fireball scattering 20 foes while trying to ignore the inevitable slowdown.

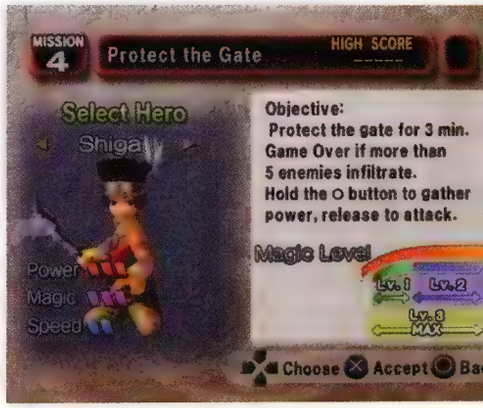
In the same vein as *State of Emergency*, there's a Challenge mode where you try to mash 50 enemies in the shortest time, or score a ten hit combo within a strict time limit. Outside of the Survival mode, the four-player mode's the long-term draw, while stat fans can revel in the accrual of new Rune spells, level ups and temporary power ups. In fact, there's nothing mystical about it – just an uncomplicated arcade scrapper you can enjoy between sips of tea. **PSM2**

Mystic Heroes is in the shops now.

OVERALL
Compelling ruck-em-up with RPG elements hampered by graphical glitches – like *Dynasty Warriors* without the sharp edges.

67

HEROIC EFFORT



SHIGA AND SPICE: The Mission mode complicates things *slightly* with time based objectives and castle defending minigames.

FOURS OF HABIT: The split-screen mode runs surprisingly fast, with a multitude of co-op games and deathmatches.

OUT UK 28TH MARCH

G1 JOCKEY 3

Whoah, before you whip out your wallet, Koei's exercise in accuracy proves you whinny some but lose others.

There's a tendency to dismiss horse racing simulations for their complexity and niche subject matter, patronising fans, sneerily denouncing new additions and cracking untold equine puns for cheap laughs. But when we tell you Koei's latest features more than 6000 different horses, a revamped training mode and new jockey skills, we mean it. We know what a good stable management game needs, and if you loved *G1 Jockey 2* you should stop reading NOW and rush to the shops.

TROTTERS INDEPENDENT: Double tap the shoulder buttons to change your horse's leading leg on tight bends.

INFO
- **DEVELOPER** Koei
- **PUBLISHER** Koei UK
- **GAME TYPE** Horse Racing
- **PRICE** £39.99

DETAILS
- Three modes: Tutorial and Practice, plus the two-player Versus mode.
- Over 6000 horses to choose from.

Still here? *Promise* you don't like horses? We confess – this is desperate. All you do is battle through menu screens, negotiating with Lord Charles lookalikes, squirming in agony as they bang on about RP points and the importance of hanging out at the stables. Who cares if each horse has 36 stats including a spurt rating? No, we don't know what colour Corporal Fortune is so we can be trusted to ride him. After 20 minutes, we hadn't got anywhere *near* the saddle, let alone won a bloody race. When you do take part, it's just an energy juggling RTS with a whip button. Gah…

Yes, in a different world, horse racing might be bigger than football, but it *isn't* and, frankly, it just reminds us of being unemployed and watching Channel 4. True fans might be foaming at the snoutbag, but they've got to accept that *G1 Jockey 3* is the only competent, tactical and inpenetrable option they've got. **PSM2**

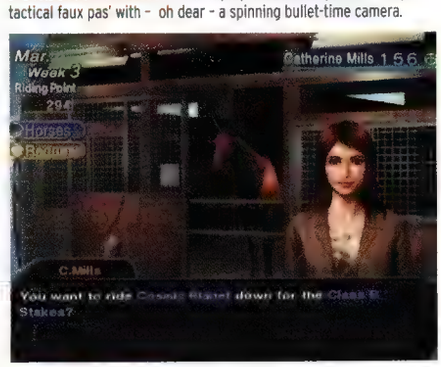
Cantering into shops on the 28th.

OVERALL
A soap opera Career mode can't save Koei's sim from choking on its own complexity. For horse loving number crunchers only.

43

HANDICAPPED

FURLONG SHORT: The replay mode lets you re-live your tactical faux pas' with - oh dear - a spinning bullet-time camera.



STABLE MANNERS: If you didn't know better, you'd swear she was peddling… y'know, horse… or, er… tail… but, seriously…

ASH MACHINE: Your twin brother and nemesis. Kill all the other Galerians and you'll face him.

OUT UK 21ST MARCH

BETTER OFF HEAD: Parano's battle variations lead to one too many deaths for our liking. He's a tough one, that's for sure.

INFO

- **CODE TESTED** PAL (UK)
- **DEVELOPER** Enterbrain
- **PUBLISHER** Big Ben
- **GAME TYPE** Third-person Action Adventure
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **ESSENTIALS** 1 Player, Memory Card, DualShock 2

DETAILS

- Three drugs: Nalcon, Red and D-Felon.
- Four bosses to face; Spider, Parano, Nitro and finally Ash.
- The ability to shield yourself by rolling ◎ or by creating a mental shield with ⊡.

GALERIANS: ASH

Berrrwains! No need for 'em in this rat-run of a sciffy adventure.

REVIEWER: Jonnie Bryant

The inventiveness of mankind to hide their failings is incredible. The comb-over, the prosthetic, the forty-something acquisition of the two-seater sports... So why then when it comes to coders – an inventive bunch by nature you'd think – do we always get the same ol' same old as they do their best to disguise just how emaciated their adventure actually is?

First tactic, busywork. You know the stuff: get the key from level seven to open that doorway back on level one. The second, stick in a few bosses with multiple attack routines that'll take six attempts to beat. We've seen it before and we should now be wise to any game that attempts to con us with either of these moves. Which brings us to *Galerians: Ash*, guilty on both counts, but also trailing a skullful of other crimes behind it.

Let's just pick something off the 'bad' list at random. Cutscenes. Right, in any other survival horror title they're something of a cinematic reward. Here, they're another reason to prolong tedious gameplay while attempting to make up for a graphics engine that's more jagged than Picasso's mum. Then, how about an item interaction system that allows you to identify things of interest, but doesn't let you pick them up? "You see a cable" may well flash up on screen, but try and grab hold of it and your hands turn into buckets. Return five minutes later with express orders to pick it up and... ta-da, it pops into your inventory. It's a senselessness that permeates every level of the game .

Take the appearance of the drugs that hero Rion needs to focus his brainwaves for combat. They just materialise on screen. It kind of makes sense when you're trapped in a VR limbo at the start but, out in the 'real' world, it doesn't wash.

"WE SHOULD NOW BE WISE TO ANY GAME THAT ATTEMPTS TO CON US WITH EITHER OF THESE MOVES"

CELINE RION: Get the aim of your Red powers exactly right and you're able to flambé enemies in seconds.

INSIGHT

Sony is the only electronics company in the world to conduct research into extra sensory perception. After seven years the project was eventually closed down in 1998 with the conclusion being that, yes, ESP does actually exist but that the researchers involved couldn't find any way of harnessing the spooky power to produce marketable products – cue the Twilight Zone theme...

In fact, combat's the only saving grace, as the removal of weapons makes you reasonably battle shy until you get your 'head' round using psychic attacks in a spell-like manner. Select which drug type you want to attack with and then charge your brain up to a mental hot-spot before letting rip. Yet even this suffers from a haphazard approach to the respawning of enemies, leaving you perpetually unsure whether you *can* clear an area before progressing.

Flawed by dull repetition, this still merits an average score rather than a kicking thanks to the single innovation of unarmed combat. It's just a shame the ideas ran dry so early. PSM2

Mind-melding with the mass of other second rate sci fi adventures this month.

GELLER'S CHOICE

1. **THE THING** Still the best SF action adventure on PS2 despite problems with the 'trust and fear' mechanism.
2. **EXTERMINATION** Definitely worth a look for those that like the whole isolated base full of horror thing.
3. **GALERIANS: ASH** Not the crap sucking end of the scale but still full of headache and heartbreak.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ It's a new take on combat that works, and works well.
- So much back-tracking you'll learn to hate every location.

GRAPHICS
+ The warp effects when Rion's brain overloads are nice.
- Every edge has that first generation PS2 feel about it.

SOUND
+ Intense, eerie strings keep you on edge.
- Dialogue only in the cutscenes.

LIFESPAN
+ You can scrap for upgrades
- Once you've seen a corridor six times, you won't want to go on.

OVERALL
Aside from the lobe melting battles, this is little more than a prolonged, dull runabout with only tough boss battles to break the tedium.

50

PILL ODDY

OUT UK now

EVERBLUE 2

An RPG with gills – and not the kind you use to buy swords and potions with, either.

Whereas some games have you battling forceful adversaries in the far reaches of the galaxy where you'll get your throat torn out by salivating xenomorphs, *Everblue 2* has you picking up rusty screws on the seabed and bobbing gently alongside bottlenosed dolphins. This game is so laid back you'll be horizontal playing it.

Like its low-key predecessor, *Everblue 2* is a game of two halves. On the one hand you wander around a point-and-click themed coastal town chatting to old sea dogs and getting pointers as to where good places to dive are, and on the other you sink beneath the blue depths, taking pictures of marine life, combing the coral for junk and salvaging essentials from ship wrecks (which you can sell to upgrade your equipment). If the truth be told, the game is relaxing and not without a certain charm – although any kind of excitement has long since dozed off in a hammock.

In fact, after two hours' play, the most edge of the seat moment came when we stumbled across a shark. But far from barrel-roll us into a watery grave, our air supplies merely depleted quickly whenever it was in close proximity. Oh the terror.

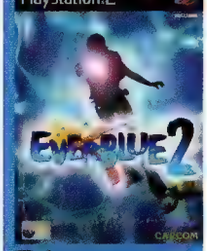
There's nothing fundamentally wrong with the game apart from the fact that it'll never raise your pulse above resting. But as an alternative to the violence and shock tactics employed by other, dare we say, better, games, *Everblue 2*'s world is its oyster. Or something. **PSM2**

Washing up on a shelf near you now

WATER FIND: On one of your relaxing dives you stumble across this plane wreck packed with plunderous gear.

INFO
- **DEVELOPER** Arika
- **PUBLISHER** Capcom Eurosoft
- **GAME TYPE** RPG
- **PRICE** £29.99

PlayStation.2



DETAILS
- More than 30 hours of aquatic ambience.
- Two gaming styles in one.
- Learn about hundreds of different species of marine life.

OVERALL
***Everblue 2* is a strangely compelling game. Whether you'll ever find time to take the plunge is another thing, though.**

56

DRIPPY

HAMMER SANDWICH: Oh frack! See that pink water? That's you that is. You're spared the real gore (and any drama) though.

BEACH TO THEIR OWN: The land areas are screen-based and must be navigated by the old point-and-click method.

OUT UK now

BEN HUR: BLOOD OF BRAVES

Chariot racing meets magical trickery? Charlton Heston will be throwing down his Colt in disgust.

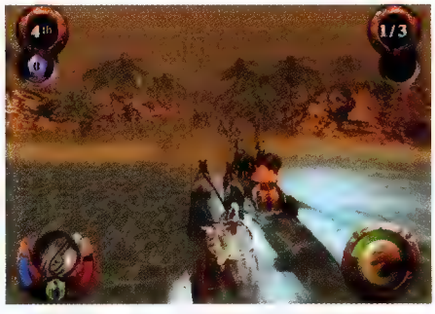
Perhaps realising that basing a game on the most memorable scene from a 44-year-old film wouldn't quite cut it in today's marketplace, Microids have been a bit clever in adding a 'Blood of Braves' suffix which allows them some artistic license with this racing game – like mystical, magic powers. Ooh-ahh!

However, Microids' failure to get its cack together in time for a Christmas release has meant that *Circus Maximus* has been able to steal its… thunder is too dramatic a word for this dump, so let's call it drizzle. Admittedly, the premise for the game is intriguing, adding strategy and combat to racing. It's not merely a case of going flat out, more a case of tactically planning when best to let your steeds gather breath and when to whip their plump hides into giving you that extra bit of pace.

But it's the magic element that has this game rolling back the years on its subject matter. Four different kinds of spells enable you to replenish health, bamboozle your opponents or turbo-charge your chariot. With this system though, Microids have essentially rendered the game's combat elements obsolete, as you can just turbo-boost your way out of trouble.

The misery is compounded by your horses' preprogrammed intent to stick to the course which turns any attempt to steer them off it into a battle of wills. We could go on, but why waste any more space on this lion-fodder? **PSM2**

Blood of Braves is out now.



JUDAS, A CHARIOT: Your rivals won't hesitate to bomb you with magical weaponry, but fighting back is futile...

INFO
- **DEVELOPER** Microids France
- **PUBLISHER** Microids
- **GAME TYPE** Racing
- **PRICE** £39.99

PlayStation.2

DETAILS
- 1-2 player split-screen.
- 17 Tracks, 15 characters.
- Six modes, including Ascension, Death Match and Arcade.

OVERALL
The whole *Road Rash* on chariots attached to a classic movie moment was a wild idea, but the finished article is just Hur-tful.

42

MANURE

AINSLEY CHARIOT: The combat is primitive and way over the top. Why not just hack their head off and be done with it?

CHEVY MACE: Go and see the iron-monger to buy new weapons, wheels and even several different breeds of horse.

DVD REVIEWS

THE ESSENTIAL **PSM2** VERDICT ON EVERY NEW RELEASE

MR BEN: Affleck is on top form as Harrison's youthful alter ego.

OUT UK NOW

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS

Ben Affleck steps into Harrison Ford's Hush Puppies for the latest Ryan flick...

STARRING ..... Ben Affleck, Morgan Freeman, James Cromwell, Bridget Moynahan, Bruce McGill, Ciaran Hinds, Live Schreiber, Colm Feore
DIRECTOR ..... Phil Alden Robinson
CERTIFICATE 12
PRICE £19.99

So let's get this straight, shall we? The Sum Of All Fears is set nowadays and, in real-time chronology, happens immediately after the events that occurred in Clear And Present Danger. Yet Jack Ryan is now being played by Ben Affleck as a youthful version of Tom Clancy's CIA hero, and we see him meeting, for the very first time, the woman who will become his wife. Um... is anyone else confused?

Fear not, for despite its tinkered timelines, Fears works perfectly as a taught, tension-wire thriller that feeds off our topical terrors about death by nuclear device. Tapping a Cold War-esque vein, we're introduced to an unstable Russian state with a recently elected president striving to do the right thing for his fractured country. Add into the mix a right-wing nutter with access to a forgotten bomb, and you have the ingredients for a nasty shock about to hit the US. Trying their best to counteract this, the US government charges top CIA bod Morgan Freeman with stabilising relations between the two countries and working out what's going on with the terrorist threat. He, in turn, recruits agency whippersnapper Jack Ryan, a specialist in Russian affairs, to solve the puzzle. But can the newcomer sort everything out before the two countries plunge into a catastrophic war?

BOOMTOWN

It's to director Phil Alden Robinson's credit that he always keeps you guessing. With a strong cast that includes such noted character stalwarts as James Cromwell (better known as the farmer from pig pic Babe) and Bruce McGill in supporting roles. When Robinson's cranking up the tension, it helps to have such quality players spewing the jargon-heavy dialogue and chewing the scenery like the old pros they are. But this is really a two-hander, with Affleck and Freeman proving a potent team. Freeman can do this sort of role in his sleep, but fortunately he's not snoozing during this. By turns, he's charming and chalky, dedicated to the job but understanding of his protégé's fears.

And Affleck, who we're so used to see playing oily charmers, does his director proud. Instead of rattling out the usual mannerisms, we watch Ryan evolve from eager young pup to the first inklings of the battle-weary old soldier that moviegoers have come to know. And his chemistry with the sexy Bridget Moynahan shows us exactly why Jack ends up married to this woman.

But it's not the actors that the film was sold on – it's the shock. Or rather, the shock*wave*. Since the trailers have already given it away, we're not committing spoiler crimes by revealing that the big bang here is the bomb set off in downtown Baltimore. You never think they're going to do the deed, but when it comes, the explosion is played for tragedy, not spectacle, which makes it all the more impressive. Action thriller with a brain *and* a heart? There's a novelty... **PSM2**

INSIGHT

- Affleck and bessie mate Matt Damon got their screen start in Robinson's Field Of Dreams.
- The American Football teams featured in the bombed match are actually Canadian.
- Clear And Present Danger director Philip Noyce passed on directing Fears.

"CAN HE SORT EVERYTHING OUT BEFORE THE TWO COUNTRIES PLUNGE INTO WAR?"

RYAN'S CHOICE

1. **CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER** Ryan squares up against Colombian drug lords.
2. **PATRIOT GAMES** Ford's first Ryan battles IRA terrorists.
3. **THE SUM OF ALL FEARS** Affleck just can't match up to the grizzled Ford.

PSM2 VERDICT

EXTRAS
Two audio commentaries ⇩ A Cautionary Tale making of documentary ⇩ visual effects breakdowns ⇩ trailer.

OVERALL
The big bang's the sell, and what we've all been waiting for, but the plot and the youthful Affleck are killer reasons to watch the flick.

78

SPY HARD

OUT UK now

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

Mr Potter's back at wizarding school to face his second year and a new threat...

STARRING Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint, Emma Watson, Richard Griffiths, Robbie Coltrane, Alan Rickman, Kenneth Branagh
DIRECTOR Chris Columbus
CERTIFICATE PG
PRICE £24.99

And so, with all the crashing inevitability of taxes and rain, the next Harry Potter flick glides on to shiny disc. Yet it's refreshing to realise that the filmmakers have taken the opportunity to fix most of the problems.

Chamber of Secrets finds Harry stuck back at his horrendous uncle and aunt's house in bland suburbia. It's not long, however, before he's rescued by best mate Ron and whipped off in a flying car to the Weasley household. Harry's happy for a while before Hogwarts' school calls them all back. This time around, there's a new danger lurking in the corridors – the legendary Chamber of Secrets has been opened, and students are being turned into living statues. Harry, Ron and Hermione investigate, but it's not long before the finger of suspicion points towards Mr Potter...

The first thing you'll notice is that the kids are growing up – voices are breaking and acting skills are finally starting to develop. Daniel Radcliffe actually starts to seem less like a cardboard cut-out of Harry come to life, while Rupert Grint is still good value, even if he's reduced to the nervy comic sidekick. But while the leads are acceptable, it's the support that really makes this worthwhile. Kenneth Branagh does his level best to heist every scene he appears in, with his preening Gilderoy Lockhart a superbly fun creation. But when he's not onscreen, there's someone else looking to dominate. Although he's restricted to a small (ish) villain walk-on, Jason Isaacs makes full use of his screentime to create a slimy bastard of a wizard – Potter enemy Draco's dad – that just oozes menace.

INSIGHT

- Hugh Grant was originally cast as Lockhart.
- 14 Ford Anglia cars were destroyed for the Whomping Willow scene.
- There's a portrait of Gandalf from LOTR in Dumbledore's study.

SEQUEL RITES

Yes, we know how it's going to end (it's another direct-from-the-book translation) and we realise that Harry can't ever get into real danger, but at least this time the darkness is a little more inherent. Plus, you get the idea that bigger plot strands are being introduced, just waiting to unravel into a whole world of trouble for the young wizards. Also improved are the special effects. If you cringed through the fake-looking Quidditch matches before, you'll appreciate the quick-fire, harsh contact sport presented here.

DARKER THE POTTER: The boys show off their acting skills: 'angry' and 'concerned'.

And while the finale hinges on another battle with a CG demon, at least the beast's an imposing snake monster and not Ian Hart with his stoopid computer-generated face.

If you don't care for Potter, nothing here will convince you that this is worth checking out. But if you're a fan, Chamber will more than satisfy your craving. Just be prepared to go cold turkey – the next one's not due until 2004... **PSM2**

MAGIC CHOICE

1 **THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING** Four disc set to rule them all.
2 **CHAMBER OF SECRETS** Year two for Harry.
3 **THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE** Hogwarts, year one.

PSM2 VERDICT

EXTRAS
19 additional/extended scenes ⬚ self-guided tours ⬚ interviews with Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint and Emma Watson ⬚ interview with JK Rowling and screenwriter Steve Kloves ⬚ kids' activity centre ⬚ Lockhart's class examination.

OVERALL
A decent companion to number one, but nothing's really surprising here. If you've read the book, you'll know what happens...

75

WIZ-BACK

THE WEST WING: SEASON 2 BOX SET 1

OUT UK 7TH APRIL

STARRING Martin Sheen, Rob Lowe
DIRECTOR Various
CERTIFICATE 15
PRICE £34.99

The first season of this political comedy drama was must-watch tellytainment. The second season steps it up a notch, if that's possible. Reeling from the assassination attempt, the President and his team face up to new challenges and the fact that the next election won't win itself. Continuing the style set by Season One, we're treated to top notch acting performances, and some of the best writing on the gogglebox, with witty lines traded by thesps who know exactly how to make it work. You may know nothing about US politics, but you'll still love this. **PSM2** **89**

REAR WINDOW

OUT UK 28TH APRIL

STARRING James Stewart, Grace Kelly
DIRECTOR Alfred Hitchcock
CERTIFICATE PG
PRICE £17.99

It's bon voyeur as James Stewart's bored wheelchair-bound writer sees what he suspects is a murder in the apartment across from his, but can't convince anyone, least of all Kelly, that what he saw was anything but innocent. Hitchcock turns the screw as only the master can – twisting our belief in what's happening and Stewart's fate until we're squealing under the tension. Stewart is solid, playing off his reputation as a nice-guy actor to illustrate how even the most together person can start to fold under pressure. Much imitated but never bettered, this is a textbook thriller. **PSM2** **90**

ALSO RELEASED

SUNSET BOULEVARD
Released Out Now **Cert** PG **Price** £15.99
Billy Wilder turns his eye on Hollywood with this cutting satire about a screenwriter and the actress who adores him. **84**

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER: SEASON SIX BOX SET
Released 14th April **Cert** 15 TBC **Price** £79.99
Buffy enters her sixth season by coming back to life and breaking into song. It's business as usual, then... **77**

THE POWERPUFF GIRLS MOVIE
Released 14th April **Cert** PG **Price** £15.99
The whacked-out hyperactive kids' cartoon has arrived on DVD. If you watch the show, you'll like the movie. Obviously. **67**

DRAGONFLY
Released 7th April **Cert** 12 **Price** £17.99
Kevin Costner comes off like a dodgy B-movie in this tale of a doctor whose patients channel his dead wife. Snore-worthy. **30**

THE BIRDS
Released 28th April **Cert** 15 **Price** £17.99
It's Hitchcock again, this time sending some pissed-off peckers chasing after Tippi Hedren and Jessica Tandy. **78**

O (OTHELLO)
Released Out Now **Cert** 15 **Price** £19.99
The classic tale relocated to college life USA as Mekhi Pfeiffer battles for the affections of Julia Stiles. Is it worth it, we ask... **65**

COMING SOON

DONNIE DARKO
19 May
£34.99

DIE ANOTHER DAY
19 May
£17.99

ROBIN HOOD PRINCE OF THIEVES: SPECIAL EDITION
16 May
£19.99

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THE GETAWAY
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GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY
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JAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE
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THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS
Become invincible, perform devastating attacks

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP
BURNOUT
BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT
CONFLICT: DESERT STORM
CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTEX
CRAZY TAXI
DEAD OR ALIVE 2
DEVIL MAY CRY
FIFA 2003
GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC
GRAND THEFT AUTO III
GRAN TURISMO CONCEPT: 2002 TOKYO GENEVA
HEADHUNTER
HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN
JAMES BOND 007 IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE
LEGENDS OF WRESTLING
LMA MANAGER 2002
MAX PAYNE
MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE
PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER
PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2
RATCHET & CLANK
RAYMAN M
RED FACTION
RED FACTION II
RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X
ROCKY
SMASH COURT TENNIS: PRO TOURNAMENT
SPIDER-MAN
SPYRO: ENTER THE DRAGONFLY
SSX TRICKY
STAR WARS: JEDI STARFIGHTER
STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS
STATE OF EMERGENCY
STUNTMAN
TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT
THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS
THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE
THIS IS FOOTBALL 2002
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2002
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003
TIMESPLITTERS
TOCA RACE DRIVER
TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4
TUROK: EVOLUTION
V-RALLY 3
VIRTUA FIGHTER 4
WIPEOUT FUSION
WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP 2001
WRC II EXTREME

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PSM2 GAMER'S LOUNGE

MAX. SMART/MIN. EFFORT

Sometimes it pays to be patient; to sit quietly while everyone else is hurling abuse at each other during *another* game of *Pro Evo 2*. Esther's quiet time's been well spent this month, telling people what to do in her own special pad in *The Sims*. The payoff? Real life's beginning to reflect her decisions. Marcus has made the tea *for once*. Jonnie's still urinating on the floor – but at least Milf's helping to mop the vile stuff up. And Dan G, despite not *really* being part of the team (he just sits near us, scratching) insists on sitting in the PSM2 jacuzzi, laughing quietly to himself. And it's all because of Esther. Sitting quietly. Telling us to do stuff.

1

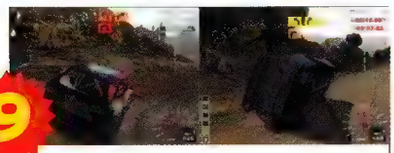
THE SIMS

While getting *The Getaway* to No.1 took incredible marketing muscle, fashion shoots in Loaded and more, *The Sims* quietly stormed the chart with nothing more than the promise of manipulating other people's tiny lives.

2

MORTAL KOMBAT

Oooh. Shocker. If *Kombat* can't get to number one, there's little hope for any beat-em-up to crack it, surely? Are are the days of two videogame men punching each other dead long gone?



9

WRC2 EXTREME

Colin McRae rolls out of the top 20, leaving Sony's super-real rally sim to burn up to ninth place. If only it went to number three, we could have made a very bad joke about The Third Place.

CHARTS FOR MONTH ENDING 22ND FEBRUARY

PS2 TOP 20

Ah, at last – a bit (a *tiny* bit) of movement. *The Sims* rules, apparently, and – quite shockingly – *Mortal Kombat* comes in under it at number two. Seems like the beat-em-up *can* be defeated by a cooking and cleaning adventure...

Position	GAME NAME	Publisher	Developer
1	The Sims	EA	EA/Maxis
2	Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance	Midway	Midway
3	The Getaway	SCEE	SCEE
4	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	Rockstar Games	Rockstar North
5	FIFA 2003	EA	EA Sports
6	Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	EA	EA
7	WWE Smackdown! Shut Your Mouth	THQ	Yuke's
8	James Bond 007 In... Nightfire	EA	Eurocom
9	WRC 2 Extreme	SCEE	Evolution Studios
10	Pro Evolution Soccer 2	Konami Europe	KCE Tyo
11	Ratchet & Clank	SCEE	Insomniac Games
12	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Activision	Neversoft
13	Spider-Man: The Movie	Activision	Treyarch
14	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003	EA	EA
15	LMA Manager 2003	Codemasters	Codemasters
16	Medal of Honor: Frontline	EA	EA
17	Star Wars: Bounty Hunter	Activision	LucasArts
18	Kingdom Hearts	SCEE	Square/Disney
19	Red Faction 2	THQ	Volition
20	Need for Speed 2: Hot Pursuit	EA	EA

JAPANESE TOP 5

1	Devil May Cry 2	Capcom	Capcom
2	Exciting Pro Wrestling 4	Yuke's	Yuke's
3	Taiko No Tatsujin	Namco	Namco
4	Nobunaga's Ambition	Koei	Koei
5	James Bond 007 In... Nightfire	EA Square	EA

US TOP 5

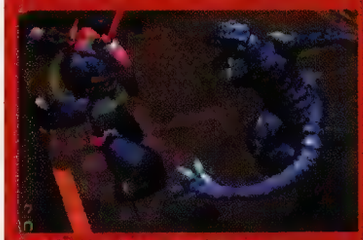
1	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	Rockstar Games	Rockstar North
2	Yu-Gi-Oh!	Konami	KCEJ
3	Xenosaga	Namco	Namco
4	The Getaway	SCEA	SCEE
5	Dark Cloud 2	SCEA	Level 5

PSM2'S TOP 5IVE

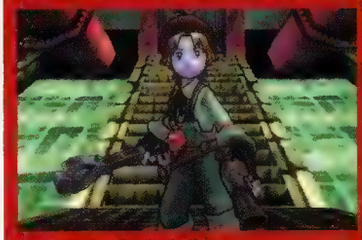
What's been wearing out our DVDs (PS2)

1. Splinter Cell

2. Def Jam Vendetta



3. War of the Monsters



4. Dark Chronicle

5. Pro Evolution Soccer 2

NEW & IMPROVED

HOW IT WORKS...

Absolute PS2 is a run-down of all the available UK PAL games PSM2 have put through the wringer. We've also included some choice, or interesting, NTSC import titles that might appeal to diehard gamers with import machines.

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ABSOLUTE PS2

PSM2 reviews are *the* definitive opinion – your best friend in the game-buying minefield. Check before you, er... cheque.

ACTION-ADVENTURE

7 BLADES
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #11 — 72
An action-lead game that'll satisfy slash-em-up fiends.

ALONE IN THE DARK: THE NEW NIGHTMARE
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #15 — 66
Dumps any pretensions of originality for lumpen familiarity.

BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE
Publisher> Virgin Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17 — 70
Fast, good-looking and addictively fun to play.

BATMAN VENGEANCE
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17 — 48
Super-game turned super-villain thanks to daft level design.

BLADE 2
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28 — 51
By-the-numbers hitting that doesn't capture the film.

BLOOD OMEN 2
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22 — 79
A horror romp with great atmosphere and visuals.

CASPER: SPIRIT DIMENSIONS
Publisher> TDK Mediactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22 — 48
Non-threatening junior gaming with a shiny veneer. Dull.

DEAD TO RIGHTS
Publisher> Namco
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #33 — 77
More variety, attitude and innovation than *Max Payne*.

DEVIL MAY CRY
Publisher> Capcom
Version> PAL **Issue**> #15 — 90
Blindingly gorgeous and cracking to play.

DEVIL MAY CRY 2
Publisher> Capcom
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #33 — 72
Not as cool or as polished as the first one.

DNA: DARK NATIVE APOSTLE
Publisher> Virgin Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16 — 37
Makes you work extremely hard for very little gain.

DRAKAN: THE ANCIENTS' GATES
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #20 — 75
Cracking adventure let down by seen-it-all-before gameplay.

ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18 — 52
Illogical puzzles and missions – distinctly average stuff.

EOE: EVE OF EXTINCTION
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22 — 71
Fun at times, but mainly boringly familiar.

EXTERMINATION
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #09 — 78
Action, gunplay and panic, despite an unoriginal story.

FATAL FRAME
Publisher> Tecmo
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #23 — 77
Stylish and immensely frightening.

FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING, THE
Publisher> Vivendi Universal
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30 — 70
A half-decent attempt to do this epic tale justice.

FRANK HERBERT'S DUNE
Publisher> Cryo
Version> PAL **Issue**> #20 — 22
Remedial AI, ham-fisted controls and a terrible game.

GETAWAY, THE
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31 — 78
A fearsome achievement hampered by flawed controls.

GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO
Publisher> Interplay
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17 — 80
Good level design and the novelty of playing as three sides.

GRAND THEFT AUTO 3
Publisher> Take 2
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16 — 92
Amoral. And the attention to detail keeps you hooked.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY
Publisher> Rockstar Games
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #29 — 97
BEST ACTION TITLE The best that videogaming can offer

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31 — 65
A good-looking game that'll satisfy Potter fans.

HEADHUNTER
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #19 — 81
An action adventure of Hollywood proportions from Sega.

HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28 — 89
A rock-solid, free-form adventure.

ICO
Publisher> SCEA
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #17 — 85
Strikes new ground for creative gaming. Less, literally, is more.

LEGION: LEGEND OF EXCALIBUR
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #27 — 70
Satisfactory, if flawed – A good, solid fantasy, though.

MARK OF KRI, THE
Publisher> SCEA
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #33 — 74
A decent attempt at improving on the hack 'n' slasher.

MAX PAYNE
Publisher> Take 2
Version> PAL **Issue**> #19 — 82
Stylish, dark and violent but marred by ropey looks.

MDK2 ARMAGEDDON
Publisher> Interplay
Version> PAL **Issue**> #09 — 76
Some inventive ideas let down by basic design flaws.

MEN IN BLACK 2: ALIEN ESCAPE
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #26 — 42
A rough shoot-em-up that does nothing new.

METAL GEAR SOLID 2
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #20 — 96
Worth every bit of the hype.

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE
Publisher> Konami
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #33 — 78
Great for those who've not played *MGS1*.

MINORITY REPORT
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31 — 60
Clever effects, but it's all over in a few hours.

MUMMY RETURNS, THE
Publisher> Vivendi
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17 — 46
Flawed controls and stilted gameplay. Not fun.

ONI
Publisher> Take 2
Version> PAL **Issue**> #07 — 62
Hi-tech combat lost in dull environments.

ONIMUSHA
Publisher> Capcom
Version> PAL **Issue**> #07 — 80
Survival horror with the emphasis on carnage not tension.

ONIMUSHA 2
Publisher> Capcom
Version> PAL **Issue**> #27 — 89
Great combat, beautiful effects and diverting puzzles.

OPERATION WINBACK
Publisher> KOEI
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #08 — 68
Compelling, but nowhere near *MGS2*.

POWERPUFF GIRLS, THE
Publisher> Bam! Entertainment
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31 — 29
No challenge at all, unless you're a drooling toddler.

PRIMAL
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33 — 79
Afternoon-stealing fun.

PRISONER OF WAR
Publisher> Codemasters
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24 — 73
Good idea and atmosphere, but slow moving.

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X
Publisher> Capcom
Version> PAL **Issue**> #13 — 80
This revisit to zombie hell is familiar, but scary, stuff.

RUNE: VIKING WARLORD
Publisher> Take 2
Version> PAL **Issue**> #13 — 56
Visually inept at times, but still enough fun to interest.

RYGAR: THE LEGENDARY ADVENTURE
Publisher> Tecmo
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #33 — 78
A polished and enjoyable tale of Roman rivalry.

SHADOW OF ZORRO
Publisher> Cryo
Version> PAL **Issue**> #20 — 35
Far too clumsy to be anything that approaches fun.

SHADOW MAN: 2ECOND COMING
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #20 — 68
Brave, enjoyable, but ultimately flawed.

SHIFTERS
Publisher> 3DO
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24 — 40
Save your cash for *Onimusha 2*.

SHINOBI
Publisher> Sega
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #31 — 75
Bags of style, but too monotonous.

SILENT HILL 2
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #15 — 88
This version's short, but the impact is unrivalled.

SILENT HILL 2: THE DIRECTOR'S CUT
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33 — 89
The definitive *SH2* package.

SOS: THE FINAL ESCAPE
Publisher> Agetec
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33 — 81
A well-balanced, gripping and funny action adventure.

SOUL REAVER 2
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17 — 78
A total revamp – not fresh, but still tasty.

SPIDER-MAN: THE MOVIE
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24 — 70
Very hard in places, but still good fun.

STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31 — 62
Without the Star Wars link, you'd barely look twice.

STATE OF EMERGENCY
Publisher> Take 2
Version> PAL **Issue**> #20 — 75
Non-stop, entertaining violence that's just a bit too shallow.

SUPERMAN: SHADOW OF APOKOLIPS
Publisher> Atari
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — 48
Great hero, very average game

TERMINATOR: DAWN OF FATE
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28 — 49
Nicks all the best ideas from other games.

THING, THE
Publisher> Vivendi
Version> PAL **Issue**> #27 — 83
A brilliant adaptation of a unique movie.

WARRIORS OF MIGHT & MAGIC
Publisher> 3DO
Version> PAL **Issue**> #09 — 24
The bad level design is only the start of many problems.

X SQUAD
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #06 — 59
Average Bland graphics and poor puzzles don't help, either

ZETTAI ZETSUMAI TOSHI
Publisher> Irem Software
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #24 — 78
Dodgy control system, but generally very entertaining.

ADVENTURE

ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #12 — 82
Thoughtful, funny and addictively gentle.

ACTION-STRATEGY

BATTLE ENGINE AQUILA
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31 — 78
Masterful looks, with skies full of fire.

DEFENDER
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31 — 76
Solid, frantic and ponderous.

DROPSHIP
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18 — 75
An explosive title with a frustrating difficulty level.

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2
Publisher> Midas
Version> PAL **Issue**> #04 — 78
Fast-paced action with excellent, but foggy, game structure.

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3
Publisher> Namco
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #20 — 71
A lack of innovation leaves this as just a decent update.

GHOST RECON
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30 — 65
Great tension, but slow and largely uneventful.

PROJECT EDEN
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #14 — 86
A rare combination of brains and guns – looks good, too.

REIGN OF FIRE
Publisher> Bam! Entertainment
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30 — 71
A flight sim with scales.

SOCOM: US NAVY SEALS
Publisher> SCEA
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #30 — 82
Well worth a look, but you'll need broadband…

STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33 — 69
A shameless tie-in with a few passable moments.

ARCADE

18 WHEELER
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #19 — 36
Simplistic, one-dimensional and extremely dull racer.

AIR RANGER RESCUE HELICOPTER
Publisher> Midas
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — 24
One of the most maddening games we've ever played.

AKIRA PSYCHO BALL
Publisher> Bandai
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #25 — 47
A ball-breakingly average pinball sim.

CITY CRISIS
Publisher> Take 2
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16 — 62
The lack of variety extinguishes the long-term appeal.

CRAZY TAXI
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #10 — 80
An incredibly addictive, albeit short, arcade hoot.

GAUNTLET
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #10 — 32
Best as a multiplayer, but you'll all suffer together.

GRADIUS 3 & 4
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #02 — 29
An arcade-perfect conversion of a dull shoot-em-up.

GUNDAM: FEDERATION VS ZEON
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — 39
Shallow, repetitive, tired and relentlessly tedious.

SPY HUNTER
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #14 — 79
A beautifully crafted thrill with an undeniable sense of style.

SILPHEED
Publisher> Working Design
Version> PAL **Issue**> #03 — 51
Burns bright to the bitter, but quickly finished, end.

BEAT-EM-UP

BARBARIAN
Publisher> Titus
Version> PAL **Issue**> #25 — 66
Fun, but basic beat-em-up. No contest for *Tekken*.

BLOODY ROAR 3
Publisher> Virgin Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #11 — 79
No depth, but lots of explosions, acrobatics and fun.

CAPCOM VS SNK 2: MARK OF THE MILLENNIUM 2001
Publisher> Capcom
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17 — 83
Probably the best 2D fighter ever.

DEAD OR ALIVE 2
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #05 — 83
Comic bosoms are no substitute for two-player scraps.

DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30 — 60
Competent enough, but won't impress non-fans.

GUILTY GEAR X
Publisher> Virgin Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17 — 78
Sparky, but not quite as good as *Capcom Vs SNK 2*.

JO JO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE
Publisher> Capcom
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #27 — 55
Inadequate play mechanics don't do the manga strip justice.

KENGO
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #09 — 60
This could've been something special, instead it's dull.

LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — 76
A bit simplistic and repetitive.

MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2
Publisher> Capcom
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — 84
Brilliant fun with a frighteningly deep fighting system.

MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33 — 85
A big surprise and a big score.

ROCKY
Publisher> Rage
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — 84
Wins on points and nostalgia value.

SAMURAI
Publisher> Bam! Entertainment
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #25 — 74
An excellent idea, reasonably well done.

SCORPION KING, THE: RISE OF THE AKKADIAN
Publisher> Vivendi/Universal
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — 23
Cack-handed combat.

STREET FIGHTER EX3
Publisher> Capcom
Version> PAL **Issue**> #05 — 79
A worthwhile update of an elderly series.

TEKKEN 4
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #27 — 90
BEST BEAT-EM-UP PS2's premier fighter.

TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #04 — 87
The genre-defining master of violence.

THE BOUNCER
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #11 — 66
A passable evening's rented entertainment.

UFC: THROWDOWN
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #27 — 75
A well-realised game offering something genuinely different.

VIRTUA FIGHTER 4
Publisher> Sony
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #20 — 87
The most challenging fighter for ages.

WWE SMACKDOWN! SHUT YOUR MOUTH
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — 82
Astounding for fans, adequate for everyone else.

WWF SMACKDOWN! JUST BRING IT
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16 — 80
More a next-gen tweaking of *Know Your Role*.

X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31 — 67
A heroic effort, let down by an uneven fighting system.

BEMANI

BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24 — 58
Too hard for kids and too repetitive for the rest of us.

DANCE SUMMIT 2001
Publisher> Enix
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #06 — 60
Lots of funny and genuinely impressive moments.

FREQUENCY
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23 — 83
Fast and furious button-mashing.

GITAROO MAN
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22 — 79
Rhythm action the way it should be.

JUNGLE BOOK GROOVE PARTY
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #10 — 50
Tiny Disney fans will enjoy it, however briefly.

MAD MAESTROS
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22 — 70
Entertaining, but not as inventive as *Gitaroo Man*.

PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2
Publisher> Sony
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #16 — 78
Sherbet flavoured antidote to everything that's bleak on PS2.

SPACE CHANNEL 5
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #20 — 56
Stylish, sci-fi bemani with frustrating gameplay.

DRIVING

4X4 EVOLUTION
Publisher> Take 2 Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #08 — 40
An essentially dull SUV racer.

4X4 EVOLUTION 2
Publisher> Take 2 Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31 — 36
A jerky, coasting monstrosity of a game.

ARCTIC THUNDER
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16 — 58
Extremely average arcade shoot-and-race effort.

ATV OFFROAD FURY
Publisher> Sony
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #09 — 70
A pity that SCEA didn't compromise on the realism.

AUTO MODELLISTA
Publisher> Capcom
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #28 — 80
PS2's best arcade racer – but still doesn't beat *GT3*.

MORE REVIEWS OVER THE PAGE...

ABSOLUTE PS2

"YOUR BEST FRIEND IN THE GAME-BUYING MINEFIELD"

BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS
Publisher> Empire
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31
Rootin' tootin' redneck haulage fun.
79

BURNOUT
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #15
An ideal foil to *GT3*'s smart-arsed sensibilities.
88

BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28
Beautiful, emotional racing. Essential.
91

C.A.R.T. FURY
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #12
The action is pacey, but the dodgy graphics let it down.
65

CIRCUS MAXIMUS: CHARIOT WARS
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #25
Gimmicky racer with paper-thin novelty value.
55

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3
Publisher> Codemasters
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29
McRae's long-awaited PS2 debut is a triumph.
88

CRASHED
Publisher> Rage
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28
Half-hearted effort that feels like a bonus section
31

DOWNFORCE
Publisher> Titus
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23
Adequate F1 racing, but a little too predictable.
64

DRIVEN
Publisher> Bam! Entertainment
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17
Dumb, vacuous, tired and shallow.
46

DRIVING EMOTION TYPE-S
Publisher> Squaresoft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #01
Over-realistic handling makes it damn-near unplayable.
57

DROME RACERS
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31
The Sunny Delight of futuristic racers.
50

EXTREME-G 3
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #13
Close, but absolutely miles away at the same time.
60

FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #27
A stylish effort that's just too damn hard for its own good.
67

FORMULA ONE 2001
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #09
A rewarding challenge for anyone willing to rise to it.
84

FORMULA ONE 2002
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29
The most complete package yet, let down by stupid errors.
68

F1 2001
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #15
An accessible racer for everyone, with depth for veterans.
84

F1 2002
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24
One of the most accessible simulators we've seen.
84

F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #05
A poor quality title – basically a PSone game on PS2.
47

F1 RACING CHAMPIONSHIP
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #07
Fine – just don't expect too much of it.
66

FREEKSTYLE
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #25
A pastiche of *SSX* without the originality or depth.
59

G-SURFERS
Publisher> Midas
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16
Spend 40 quid on a Scalextric kit instead.
49

GRAND PRIX CHALLENGE
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31
A playable and beautifully realised racer.
85

GRAN TURISMO 3
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #13
BEST RACING TITLE Astounds and challenges
93

GRAN TURISMO CONCEPT 2002 TOKYO-GENEVA
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #25
Dumbed down version of *GT3*: short but playable.
79

GTC: AFRICA
Publisher> Rage
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16
Lovely to look at, but uninspiring to play.
74

GUMBALL 3000
Publisher> SCi
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29
Superfast road racing that's fun while it lasts.
73

HOTWHEELS VELOCITY X MAXIMUM JUSTICE
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31
A pleasant enough way of spending a couple of hours.
51

JET ION GP
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23
Worst PS2 game ever. 'Nuff sa d.
07

JET SKI RIDERS
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18
About as half as good as *Splashdown* in every respect.
38

KNIGHT RIDER
Publisher> Koch Media
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30
An ill-conceived and painful little game.
27

LEGO RACERS 2
Publisher> Lego Software
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18
Simple racing for tots with some decent construction.
42

LE MANS 24 HOURS
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #12
Can't compete with *GT3* in an already crowded field.
73

LOONY TUNES SPACE RACE
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #19
A simple game, but provides smooth thrills and giggles.
65

LOTUS CHALLENGE
Publisher> Virgin Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16
Cloying controls + poor racing = lacklustre experience.
60

MASTER RALLYE
Publisher> Microids
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24
Fun but flawed – it smacks of an early release.
55

MICRO MACHINES
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30
A game of its time – which was about seven years ago.
59

MIDNIGHT CLUB
Publisher> Take 2
Version> PAL **Issue**> #03
Some nice touches that are compromised by the graphics.
72

MOTO GP2
Publisher> Namco
Version> PAL **Issue**> #19
Solid racing and a few extras, but no great shakes.
71

MX 2002
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #14
Not the fusion of racer and sim that it tries to be.
78

MX RIDER
Publisher> Atari
Version> PAL **Issue**> #15
An ordinary addition to an ordinary racing genre.
62

MX SUPERFLY
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #27
Better than *Freekstyle* – but not the best.
72

NEED FOR SPEED
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29
Adrenaline-scorched racing.
88

NY RACE
Publisher> Wanadoo
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17
Manages to enrage and bore at the same time.
40

PARIS-DAKAR RALLY
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #15
Intriguing racer with uninspired and tepid presentation.
60

PENNY RACERS
Publisher> Midas
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16
A bright and solid dinky racer. Cheap as well.
43

PRO RALLY 2002
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22
Passable induction to rallying, but not as good as *WRC*.
68

RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP
Publisher> SCi
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24
An average game with the occasional bad bit.
56

RALLY FUSION: RACE OF CHAMPIONS
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29
One of the better B-list rally games.
68

RC REVENGE PRO
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #04
A diverting racer that doesn't take itself too seriously.
56

RIDGE RACER 5
Publisher> Namco
Version> PAL **Issue**> #01
Fast, undeniably attractive and always fun to play.
72

RIDING SPIRITS
Publisher> Bam! Entertainment
Version> PAL **Issue**> #27
Fairly reasonable motorbike jaunt, but quite frustrating.
46

RUMBLE RACING
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #10
Arcade-style knockabout racing at its idiotic best.
76

SHOX
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28
Fails to show off enough to make it a must-have.
61

SMUGGLER'S RUN
Publisher> Take 2
Version> PAL **Issue**> #03
Not enough one-player depth to really engage.
75

SMUGGLER'S RUN 2: HOSTILE TERRITORY
Publisher> Take 2
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17
Too intense and samey.
77

SPLASHDOWN
Publisher> Atari
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16
High-adrenaline racing can't atone for the lack of innovation.
75

STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBAD RACING
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #11
A flawed karter despite having a diddy Darth Maul.
45

STUNT GP
Publisher> Titus
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16
We can't be arsed to play this again and neither will you.
38

STUNTMAN
Publisher> Atari
Version> PAL **Issue**> #26
Frustrating, but gripping gameplay.
74

SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18
Spend £30 on *Burnout* instead – this is a waste of time.
36

SUPER TRUCKS
Publisher> Jester Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22
Slow and bland – will only appeal to Super Truck fans.
45

TD OVERDRIVE
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23
Fast and fun, but lacks innovation.
64

TEST DRIVE: OFFROAD WIDE OPEN
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16
No originality – it's more reliant on luck than skill.
44

THE FLINTSTONES: VIVA ROCK VEGAS
Publisher> Swing! Entertainment
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18
Utterly rubbish.
13

THE SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16
Feels lightweight next to *Crazy Taxi*. But great design.
76

TOCA RACE DRIVER
Publisher> Codemasters
Version> PAL **Issue**> #26
Stylish storytelling – but just not as good as *GT3*.
82

TOKYO XTREME RACER
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #13
No taunts, betting or revving up at the lights. Weak.
38

TOP GEAR DARE DEVIL
Publisher> Planet
Version> PAL **Issue**> #04
Like an attractive 3D *Pac-Man*, only in small cars.
62

TOTAL IMMERSION RACING
Publisher> Empire Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31
A well-executed, albeit less in-depth, *GT3* substitute.
74

V-RALLY 3
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24
A solid satisfying racer
81

WACKY RACES
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #11
Looks nice, but let down by some really annoying flaws.
63

WILD WILD RACING
Publisher> Rage
Version> PAL **Issue**> #03
Frustrating controls make this an exasperating ride.
71

WIPEOUT FUSION
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #19
Other killer apps on PS2 relegate this to a shiny sequel.
73

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17
Looks ace and handles brilliantly.
87

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP 2 EXTREME
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29
One for true enthusiasts and no-one else.
85

WRECKLESS: THE YAKUZA MISSIONS
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30
Brainless, loud and daft.
38

XTREME EXPRESS
Publisher> Midas
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29
Bizarre and original enough to warrant 15 quid.
60

FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER

DEUS EX: THE CONSPIRACY — 88
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22
Clever, pacey and plot-heavy. Most detailed FPS yet.

HALF-LIFE — 90
Publisher> Vivendi
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16
If you've not played it on PC it's a must.

JAMES BOND 007 IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE — 88
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17
Every element thrown in so fast you can't help but enjoy it.

JAMES BOND 007 IN... NIGHTFIRE — 78
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30
Agent Under Fire reheated.

KING'S FIELD: THE ANCIENT CITY — 54
Publisher> Metro3D Inc.
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24
Moody and incompetent RPG – only for hardcore fans.

MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE — 89
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23
A supremely atmospheric and absorbing experience.

QUAKE 3 REVOLUTION — 85
Publisher> Bullfrog
Version> PAL **Issue**> #08
Bridging the gap where *Unreal* ends and *TimeSplitters* begins.

RED FACTION — 88
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #11
An entertaining action adventure that's not without flaws.

RED FACTION 2 — 85
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29
An enjoyably brainless, highly destructive romp.

RESIDENT EVIL SURVIVOR 2 CODE: VERONICA — 41
Publisher> Capcom
Version> PAL **Issue**> #20
Slow, tedious and about as chilling as a week-old kitten.

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE: GOLD EDITION — 64
Publisher> Codemasters
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23
A PC port that's a fraction of the game it should be.

STAR TREK VOYAGER: ELITE FORCE — 75
Publisher> Codemasters
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23
Frayed around the edges, but it plays tightly enough.

SUM OF ALL FEARS, THE — 57
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29
Repetitive, short and unimaginative.

TIMESPLITTERS — 86
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #04
Great multiplayer, challenges and Level Editor.

TIMESPLITTERS 2 — 95
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28
BEST FPS TITLE Zen-balanced gameplay.

TUROK EVOLUTION — 71
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #27
A conventional shooter that replicates rather than innovates.

UNREAL TOURNAMENT — 82
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL Issue> #07
Excellent single-player mode. Fails badly in multiplayer.

FLIGHT SIM

ACE COMBAT 4: SHATTERED SKIES — 80
Publisher> Namco
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #17
Superb in places with some genuinely thrilling moments.

DRAGON RAGE — 43
Publisher> 3DO
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23
Uninspiring, prosaic and lifeless.

LETHAL SKIES — 63
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #27
More Fökker than F14 – this flawed flier fails to take off.

RC SPORTS COPTER CHALLENGE — 36
Publisher> Xicat Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29
About as much fun as pulling your eyelashes out.

SKY ODYSSEY — 79
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #08
Hugely addictive with a real sensation of flight. Chilled.

MECH

ARMORED CORE 2 — 54
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #06
Awkward controls, tiny arenas and spiteful difficulty.

ARMORED CORE 2: ANOTHER AGE — 56
Publisher> Metro
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24
Bigger does not mean better – there's just more flaws.

GUN GRIFFON BLAZE — 70
Publisher> Virgin
Version> PAL **Issue**> #06
Big respect from us.

RING OF RED — 74
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #10
Lush battles and loads of strategy – a bit like chess.

ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY — 69
Publisher> TDK Mediactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30
Possibly the best-looking cartoon robot game out there.

ROBOT WARLORDS — 46
Publisher> Midas Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #08
A derivative title that's very average.

ROBOT WARS: ARENAS OF DESTRUCTION — 63
Publisher> BBC
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16
Panic action that'll leave you grinning.

ZONE OF THE ENDERS — 84
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #07
BEST MECH TITLE Short, but intense battling action

PLATFORMER

APE ESCAPE 2 — 80
Publisher> SCEI
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #30
Exactly like the original, only bigger and more attractive.

CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTEX — 66
Publisher> Vivendi
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17
Next-gen reworking of Crash's 32-bit past glories.

DISNEY'S DINOSAUR — 35
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #05
A lame game launched on the back of a successful film

DISNEY'S STITCH: EXPERIMENT 626 — 64
Publisher> Disney
Version> PAL **Issue**> #27
A capable and enjoyable platformer. If you're six.

DONALD DUCK: QUACK ATTACK — 29
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #06
Stunningly basic and enormously dull... even for kids.

DR MUTO — 59
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33
A valid attempt, but not a patch on *R&C*.

EVIL TWIN: CYPRIEN'S CHRONICLES — 30
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #19
Commits every platform sin and the plot's baffling

FREAK OUT — 79
Publisher> Swing! AG Media
Version> PAL **Issue**> #13
Nearly a classic – but repetitive with a short lifespan.

FROGGER — 25
Publisher> KCEA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22
For easily impressed children only.

GIFT — 51
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #12
More playable and less 'weird' would've helped.

HAVEN: CALL OF THE KING — 81
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29
Excellent ideas in need of some pruning.

ISLAND EXTREME STUNTS — 65
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33
Finally – a game that's both For Children and Pretty Good.

JAK & DAXTER — 85
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18
Massive, gently enthralling and fun

KLONOA 2 — 73
Publisher> Namco
Version> PAL **Issue**> #10
Visually beautiful with well-machined gameplay.

MAXIMO — 84
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #20
Ace for hardcore gamers, but very tricky in places.

MONSTERS, INC. — 41
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #19
Cunning use of cutscenes doesn't make a decent game.

PAC-MAN WORLD 2 — 75
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33
Good platforming, but Pac's yesterday's man.

PETER PAN: LEGEND OF NEVERLAND — 50
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #20
A decent adventure for pre-school sprogs.

PORTAL RUNNER — 55
Publisher> 3DO
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16
Masks solid platforming behind unbalanced level design.

RATCHET & CLANK — 91
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29
BEST PLATFORMER A labour of love on every crafted level.

RAYMAN — 48
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18
A blend of racer/platform/shooter, and a right mess, too.

RAYMAN REVOLUTION — 68
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #05
The characters are for kids, the gameplay's for adults.

SCOOBY-DOO: NIGHT OF 100 FRIGHTS — 64
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #25
Competently designed, by-the-numbers platforming.

SLY RACCOON — 80
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31
Beautifully cel-shaded thief-em-up.

SPYRO: ENTER THE DRAGONFLY — 68
Publisher> Universal Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30
A breezy, traditional platformer.

TAZ: WANTED — 70
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28
Great fun for a quick platforming fix.

TREASURE PLANET — 75
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29
Not that polished, but not a decision you'd regret.

TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER — 50
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29
Made with the most soulless corporate agenda in the world.

PUZZLE

AQUA AQUA — 71
Publisher> SCI
Version> PAL **Issue**> #04
A solid, if slightly small, puzzler.

EGGO MANIA — 40
Publisher> Kemco
Version> PAL **Issue**> #27
Pointless reshuffle of the old puzzle-game mainstays

FANTAVISION — 85
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #01
BEST PUZZLE TITLE It lacks variety, but it's fabulous fun.

KURI KURI MIX — 78
Publisher> Empire Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #10
Proves that puzzlers don't have to be about blocks.

MR MOSKEETO — 52
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22
Odd, boring and average. More strange than fun

SHREK SUPER PARTY — 58
Publisher> TDK Mediactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33
Fine – with lots of friends and lots of alcohol.

SUPER BUST-A-MOVE — 78
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #04
Little more than a buffing up of the classic game.

TETRIS WORLDS — 32
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23
Pointless fingering of an old-skool puzzler.

THE WEAKEST LINK — 60
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16
Stinks of quality and does the job properly.

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE 2 — 53
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17
If you're having a crap party then rent this.

RPG

DARK CLOUD — 81
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #11
Manages to mould RPGs into something refreshing.

MORE REVIEWS OVER THE PAGE...

ABSOLUTE PS2

"YOUR BEST FRIEND IN THE GAME-BUYING MINEFIELD"

EPHEMERAL FANTASIA
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #12 — **80**
Smells of entertainment rather than drudgery.

EVERBLUE
Publisher> Capcom
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24 — **51**
There's no excitement here at all. Put that cash away.

ETERNAL RING
Publisher> Agetec
Version> PAL **Issue**> #02 — **35**
An uninspired, sluggish RPG. Very poor.

FINAL FANTASY 10
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23 — **91**
BEST RPG The game that all the others want to be.

GRANDIA 2
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23 — **45**
Dated and dire. The combat system is utterly wasted.

JADE COCOON 2
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22 — **70**
Solid-enough critter-battling gameplay.

KINGDOM HEARTS
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — **88**
Instantly accessible and beautifully realised

LEGAIA 2: DUEL SAGA
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28 — **59**
Attempts to put a new spin on the RPG, but falls short.

ORPHEN
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #04 — **56**
A brash attempt to defy RPG with facile gameplay.

SHADOW OF MEMORIES
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #06 — **80**
Play through it a few times to really appreciate it.

SUMMONER
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #07 — **70**
A game with massive aspirations.

SUMMONER 2
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — **73**
Usurps the original, but not much inspiration or invention

WILD ARMS 3
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33 — **71**
Surprisingly non-plodding and punchy for a role player.

SHOOT-EM-UP

ARMY MEN AIR ATTACK: BLADE'S REVENGE
Publisher> 3DO
Version> PAL **Issue**> #11 — **47**
Encouraging, but looks terrible and it's very linear.

ARMY MEN: GREEN ROGUE
Publisher> 3DO
Version> PAL **Issue**> #11 — **18**
Repetitive, flawed and utterly lamentable Don't bother

ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES 2
Publisher> 3DO
Version> PAL **Issue**> #09 — **40**
A lazy banged-together rehash of established concepts

CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER
Publisher> Konami Europe
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33 — **52**
It's a classic... but then so was *Warlords of Atlantis*.

DINO STALKER
Publisher> Capcom
Version> PAL **Issue**> #26 — **58**
Capcom's best lightgun game yet, but still too lumbering

ENDGAME
Publisher> Empire
Version> PAL **Issue**> #25 — **49**
Hackneyed lightgun game with no replay value

FIREBLADE
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24 — **68**
Thrilling early on, but slack gameplay in stealth mode

FUR FIGHTERS
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #10 — **86**
BEST SHOOT-EM-UP Lots of stuff to do, humour and extras.

GUNGRAVE
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30 — **68**
Big fun, but tiny, *tiny* gameplay

IRON ACES 2
Publisher> Xicat Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #20 — **17**
A confusing travesty that looks absolutely terrible

MOTOR MAYHEM
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #15 — **63**
Dumb knockabout fun – like a diet version of *Twisted Metal*

NINJA ASSAULT
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #27 — **68**
Entertaining enough, but comes up short everywhere.

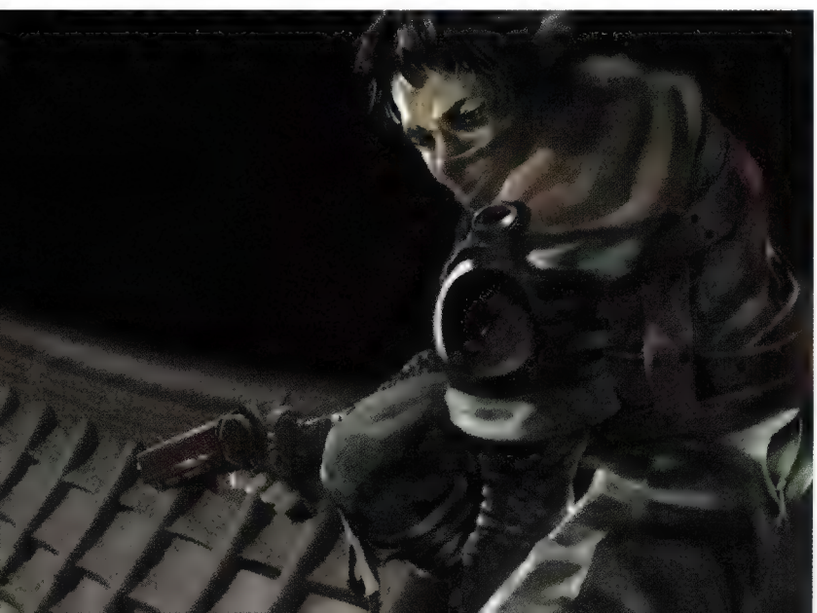
POLAROID PETE
Publisher> JVC
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18 — **35**
A bizarre scrolling 2D snapper that lacks any substance

POLICE 24/7
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #19 — **49**
Only a pathetic 14 minutes long in Story mode

REZ
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18 — **66**
Clever, but not half as innovative as it thinks it is

SILENT SCOPE 2
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16 — **67**
After an evening with this you'll have had your fill

SILENT SCOPE 3
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31 — **54**
We completed this in four hours. *Four hours*



STAR WARS: JEDI STARFIGHTER
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22 — **80**
Accomplished, attractive, plot-driven and bloody good fun.

STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #09 — **85**
Atmospheric, exciting, and full of explosions

TIME CRISIS 2
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16 — **78**
A fantastic coin-op conversion.

THUNDERHAWK: OPERATION PHOENIX
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #14 — **70**
An explosive charge into occupied territory

TOP GUN: COMBAT ZONE
Publisher> Virgin Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16 — **67**
Limited, low-level mission structure

TWIN CALIBER
Publisher> Rage
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28 — **32**
Nice idea, poorly handled.

TWISTED METAL: BLACK
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #13 — **80**
Fast and frenetic – we like the way this sick carnage plays.

UNDERWATER UNIT
Publisher> Irem
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #25 — **62**
Attractive and playable aquatic combat.

VIRTUA COP: ELITE EDITION
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30 — **44**
Looks as tired as it plays.

WDL THUNDER TANKS
Publisher> 3DO
Version> PAL **Issue**> #06 — **69**
It's basic and linear, but get into it and it's surprisingly fun.

WDL WAR JETZ
Publisher> 3DO
Version> PAL **Issue**> #11 — **29**
Halliwell-thin and totally inadequate gameplay.

SIM

ALEX FERGUSON'S PLAYER MANAGER
Publisher> 3DO
Version> PAL **Issue**> #15 — **65**
Thorough and insightful, but could get up your nose.

LMA MANAGER
Publisher> Codemasters
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22 — **86**
The best football management sim you can get for PS2.

LMA MANAGER 2003
Publisher> Codemasters
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — **84**
Fabulously well implemented and easy to grasp

PREMIER MANAGER
Publisher> Zoo Digital Publishing
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31 — **80**
A stress-free introduction to football management

THEME PARK WORLD
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #05 — **68**
Capable of running itself without any help from you.

SIMS, THE
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31 — **85**
Genuine effort has been put into the conversion.

SPORT

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22 — **71**
Nearly great but too much focus on individual flair.

AGGRESSIVE INLINE
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24 — **83**
Very entertaining. Almost a contender to the *Hawk* crown.

AIRBLADE
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16 — **77**
Not deep enough to offer limitless trick potential

ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2002
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #10 — **72**
A quality two-player game of hardball

ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2003
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23 — **74**
Impressive gameplay, but a little pedestrian.

ALPINE RACER 3
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31 — **31**
An utterly pointless release.

ATV QUAD POWER RACING 2
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33 — **68**
A fine effort, but similar to many older racers.

BASS STRIKE
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18 — **64**
A bit ropey looking and retro but competent.

BMX XXX
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30 — **58**
Good core gameplay lost in a treacle of humourless smut.

CENTRE COURT: HARD HITTER
Publisher> Midas
Version> PAL **Issue**> #19 — **62**
Poor one-player – the four-player is ace, though.

CENTRE COURT: HARD HITTER 2
Publisher> Midas
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33 — **62**
Underwhelming and flawed.

CRICKET 2002
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18 — **41**
A ham-fisted effort that's rotten to look at and to play.

DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #14 — **76**
Bugs aside, this still has some impressive moves on PS2.

DAVID BECKHAM SOCCER
Publisher> Rage
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24 — **24**
A tragic attempt at a footie game. Barely playable.

ESPN NBA 2NIGHT
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #07 — **59**
Solid, but let down by unforgivable graphical glitches

ESPN NBA 2NIGHT 2002
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24 — **72**
Great graphics, but it still lags behind the NBA series

ESPN INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #04 — **63**
A jolt of bemani can't save it from looking tired.

ESPN INTERNATIONAL WINTER SPORTS
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #20 — **55**
Immaculate presentation but lacks any variety.

ESPN NATIONAL HOCKEY NIGHT
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #09 — **68**
Bang up-to-date. Marred by a reliance on character stats.

ESPN X GAMES SKATEBOARDING
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #15 — **62**
A flawed compromise of reality and fantasy.

ESPN WINTER X GAMES SNOWBOARDING
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #04 — **70**
The unforgiving learning curve may put the curious off.

ESPN WINTER X GAMES SNOWBOARDING 2
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #20 — **69**
The authenticity's admirable, but the poor Career mode isn't

EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33 — **54**
Another average game made marginally worse.

EVOLUTION SNOWBOARDING
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33 — **43**
A bad idea, poorly executed.

FIFA 2002
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16 — 69
Flawed play and patchy presentation.

FIFA 2003
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — 81
A refreshing alternative, and a huge improvement.

FOOTBALL MANIA
Publisher> Silicon Dreams/EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — 49
Nowhere near as much fun as it appears.

G1 JOCKEY
Publisher> THQ
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22 — 39
Joyless horse racing sim, without polish or imagination.

GRAVITY GAMES BIKE: STREET. VERT. DIRT.
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28 — 48
Too hard, too restrictive and not enough initiative.

HIGH HEAT MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL 2003
Publisher> 3DO
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24 — 71
An arcadey alternative to *All-Star*.

INTERNATIONAL CUE CLUB
Publisher> Midas Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24 — 56
No PS2 magic here, but at £15 a pop, who cares?

INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE SOCCER
Publisher> Eon
Version> PAL **Issue**> #12 — 07
A rubbish game, repackaged and aimed at young fans.

ISS2
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22 — 55
Full of promise, but delivers a poor performance.

JONNY MOSELEY MAD TRIX
Publisher> 3DO
Version> PAL **Issue**> #20 — 38
About as mad as a pair of brown brogues. Very dull.

KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28 — 75
Slickly-produced, hard-working water-borne fun.

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #07 — 79
Compromised by some nasty graphical glitches.

LAKEMASTERS EX
Publisher> Midas Games
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22 — 36
Half the price of *Bass Strike*, and half the game as well.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18 — 71
For veteran 'smart marks' – fantastic. A worthwhile effort.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33 — 68
One for hardcore wrestling fans only.

LE TOUR DE FRANCE
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23 — 75
Engaging, but not to everyone's taste.

MADDEN NFL 2002
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #15 — 87
If you own *Madden 2001*, it's definitely time for a trade-in.

MADDEN 2003
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28 — 88
A lesson in how to make the definitive sports simulation.

MIKE TYSON HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING
Publisher> Codemasters
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23 — 61
No match for *Knockout*.

NBA LIVE 2001
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #07 — 72
A mostly successful translation.

NBA LIVE 2002
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17 — 70
Legible tattoos don't enhance a simple roster update.

NBA LIVE 2003
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #31 — 82
Not perfect, but going in the right direction.

NBA HOOPZ
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL Issue> #07 — 70
As fun as the *NBA Jam* series ever was.

NBA STREET
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #11 — 74
A funky take on basketball that's hard-hitting instant fun.

NEXT GENERATION TENNIS
Publisher> Wanadoo
Version> PAL **Issue**> #25 — 61
Not the greatest tennis game ever, and hard work.

NHL 2002
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #15 — 70
The gameplay's tight and the visors shiny.

NHL 2003
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28 — 69
No spark, not much fun.

NHL HITZ 2002
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16 — 72
A belting title that transcends its steep learning curve.

NHL HITZ 2003
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28 — 80
A solid-hitting hockey game.

POOL MASTER
Publisher> Take 2
Version> PAL **Issue**> #05 — 45
Skimps in the areas it should be concentrating on.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16 — 95
Faultless footy. Crap commentary.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — 94
LIKE FOOTY? GET THIS Konami retain the footy crown.

READY 2 RUMBLE: ROUND 2
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #04 — 82
Boxing that looks good and makes you laugh.

RED CARD
Publisher> Midway
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23 — 80
Arcade-paced action – not as good as *Pro Evolution*.

RUGBY
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #10 — 80
A damn fine – if a little simple at times – game of rugby.

SALT LAKE 2002
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #19 — 39
None of the punch of an arcader or the substance of a sim.

SEGA BASS FISHING DUEL
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33 — 55
Shallow, dull and humourless.

SEGA SOCCER SLAM
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30 — 36
A lazy attempt at 'fun' footy.

SHAUN PALMER'S PRO SNOWBOARDER
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18 — 35
Lacks the flair and playability of both *Tricky* and *THPS3*.

SIMPSONS SKATEBOARDING, THE
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #33 — 09
Worst. Game. Everrr. Nearly.

SMASH COURT TENNIS: PRO TOURNAMENT
Publisher> SCEE
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23 — 87
Up there with the best sports titles on PS2.

SLAM TENNIS
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #25 — 77
Smart arcade-style tennis sim – similar to *Virtua Tennis*.

SSX TRICKY
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #16 — 95
Very cool. Compulsive gameplay and riotous effects.

STREET HOOPS
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28 — 64
Gameplay imbalance turns this into a B-ball also-ran.

SVEN-GORAN ERIKSSON'S WORLD CUP CHALLENGE
Publisher> 3DO
Version> PAL **Issue**> #26 — 08
An absolute shocker.

SWING AWAY GOLF
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #05 — 70
A round of golf with ludicrous cartoon characters.

THEME PARK WORLD
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #05 — 68
Capable of running itself without any help from you.

THIS IS FOOTBALL 2002
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #14 — 71
Deceptive playability with some excellent detailing.

THIS IS FOOTBALL 2003
Publisher> Sony
Version> PAL **Issue**> #28 — 74
Reasonable footy game, but an excellent player-manager

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2001
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #08 — 72
It captures the feel and emotion of golf perfectly.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30 — 80
EA and Tiger bring home another winner.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3
Publisher>Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #17 — 96
A brilliantly-realised challenge.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4
Publisher> Activision
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30 — 94
LIKE SKATING? GET THIS Free-roaming, tough and addictive

TOP ANGLER
Publisher> Xicat Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22 — 22
Don't waste your cash – this plays like a damp dog

TRANSWORLD SURF
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #26 — 72
An enjoyable first attempt at digital surfing.

UEFA CHALLENGE
Publisher> Infogrames
Version> PAL **Issue**> #12 — 56
Stilted animation and odd ball movement. Shame.

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2001/02
Publisher> Take Two
Version> PAL **Issue**> #18 — 48
A competent footy game overwhelmed by irritating flaws.

VICTORIOUS BOXERS
Publisher> Empire Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #14 — 80
This realistic boxer falls just short of greatness.

VIRTUA TENNIS 2
Publisher> Acclaim
Version> PAL **Issue**> #30 — 88
The most complete tennis game around.

WINNING ELEVEN 6
Publisher> Konami
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #24 — 93
The most divinely-balanced, free-flowing footie game ever.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2002
Publisher> Codemasters
Version> PAL **Issue**> #14 — 76

Captures the atmosphere and realism of the game.

WTA TOUR TENNIS
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #23 — 36
Woefully inept attempt at tarting up dull tennis.

STRATEGY

AGE OF EMPIRES 2
Publisher> Konami
Version> PAL **Issue**> #15 — 76
Overflowing with tactical subtlety

ARMY MEN R.T.S
Publisher> 3DO
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24 — 56
One-dimensional combat melts any long-term appeal.

COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE
Publisher> Eidos
Version> PAL **Issue**> #24 — 79
A gripping balance of action and strategy.

CONFLICT ZONE
Publisher> Ubi Soft
Version> PAL **Issue**> #22 — 79
Cheap and pretty with legions of machines.

DYNASTY TACTICS
Publisher> Koei
Version> PAL **Issue**> #29 — 59
Tidy looks, but frustrating control system.

KESSEN
Publisher> EA
Version> PAL **Issue**> #05 — 74
Takes Japanese strategy into the major league.

KESSEN 2
Publisher> KOEI
Version> NTSC **Issue**> #20 — 66
Looks epic but lacks depth. One for RTS fans.

UTILITY

EJAY CLUBWORLD
Publisher> Empire Interactive
Version> PAL **Issue**> #26 — 84
A solid, fuss-free choice for the amateur DJ.

MTV MUSIC GENERATOR 2
Publisher> Codemasters
Version> PAL **Issue**> #10 — 90
If there's music in your soul, this disc belongs in your PS2.

MUSIC MAKER
Publisher> FastTrak
Version> PAL **Issue**> #19 — 23
Poor – but the naff video generating element's a laugh

REMEMBER...

Absolute PS2 includes all the games you should be considering and all the lemons you should avoid. Don't even consider a purchase until you've got the only opinion on PS2 gaming that matters. Don't forget to see the DVD for our Must Buys...

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The warrior's apprenticeship is over.
Heads will roll. Limbs will fly. Blood will splatter.

uk.playstation.com
www.kri-game.com

Innovative combat system enables fighting of multiple opponents simultaneously.

Murderously brutal weapons offer a range of unique finishing moves.

Strategic collaboration between Rau the Barbarian and his spiritual guide Kuzo provides a crucial upper hand.

Stealth and cunning can snap spines and open throats without the need for a fight.

Culturally diverse environments provide backdrop for epic encounters.

PlayStation 2

THE BRUTAL PLACE THE BLOODY PLACE THE BARBARIC PLACE THE THIRD PLACE

PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE
PSM2

PRO TIPS

TRAINING YOU IN THE DARK ARTS OF PS2

プロヒント

SO WHAT EXACTLY *DID* THE BUTLER SEE AT CROFT MANOR? IT HASN'T CHEERED HIM UP, MIND...

DAN

It would appear that our exposé of the recent extra curricular activities of a certain nimble porn starlet in PS2 games has caused something of a stir among our readers – in the form of a sackload of mail from sweaty-palmed anonymous individuals wanting to see more flesh. Frankly, we're appalled.

Still, what with the fiasco of *Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness*' much-delayed release coming to a close, what better time to re-open the case of perhaps the most famous game-related flesh feast in the history of games? No, it's not that cheat to get Sam Fox to juggle her udders for a simple game of Snap in her Spectrum *Strip Poker* game, but those now legendary 'Nude Lara' cheat rumours that did the rounds on an hourly basis during her meteoric rise to fame on the PSone. Of course, as gaming has gradually grown up, are we now too sophisticated to swallow such juvenile guff posted on the Net to add smutty intrigue to Lara's outings? Well, let's save you the bother of pondering and instead exclusively reveal that, on a recent visit to Core HQ, the developers let slip this code to turn Lara into a skin-coloured, nipple-less mannequin; On the title screen, press ↑, ▢, ↑, ◎, ◎, ◎, ⊗. There you go – but will you write it off as fiction or bang it in on release day? Hmmm? Whatever the outcome, make sure you take a good, hard look at yourself in the mirror afterwards and say, "Forgive me PSM2, I am sick and I need help, dammit..."

NEED HELP?

Are you cack-handed at Kessen? Boarding like a berk in SSX? Or have you got some advice you'd like to give to other readers? Then email us at PSM2@futurenet.co.uk, or write to us at the usual address.

PSM2 PRO TIPS ARE POWERED BY ARE V2

PSM2'S MANIFESTO

PSM2's TIPS ARE: An in-depth guide to the games you need them for. We don't devote masses of space to hopeless games, because we know you won't be buying them. Instead, we'll cover every essential title in detail, but keep you up-to-date with all the things that entertain, challenge or amuse us in our everyday gaming.

PSM2's TIPS AREN'T: Lovingly reproduced pictures of dozens of identical cars, or instructions to 'block' in fighting games or 'ease off the gas' while you're driving. You know that, don't you?

MASK OF CHI: Kit your pad out for free with our cheats, and you can attract the lasses like winged things round poo.

›THE PICK OF WHAT'S NEW トクセンジョウホウ

HOT TIPS

Guaranteed to kill all known games – DEAD! A bit like a paper-based toilet duck. Or a sledge hammer.

THE SIMS

Who says you don't get nowt in this life for nothing? In the smiley universe of *The Sims*, a wealth of freebies are easily accessible by holding down L1+R1+L2+R2 at the main menu to access a cheats menu. From there, enter any of the following codes...

All locked items and skins
Enter MIDAS at the cheat menu, then begin the game in 'Get A Life' mode. Get into the hot tub with the girl, then press Start to pause. Select 'Quit', followed by 'Just Quit' and you'll unlock all objects and bonus character skins in subsequent games.

Free everything
Enter FREEALL at the cheat menu and all in-game objects will now be free.

Unlock The Sims
Enter SIMS at the cheat menu and the 'Play The Sims' mode will be unlocked on the main menu without you having to complete 'Get A Life' mode first.

EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING

Abruptly-ending skatelines, combos that expire at 99,999 points? What's that all about? Reduce the misery and get straight down to the real attraction of this game – skating as Snake.

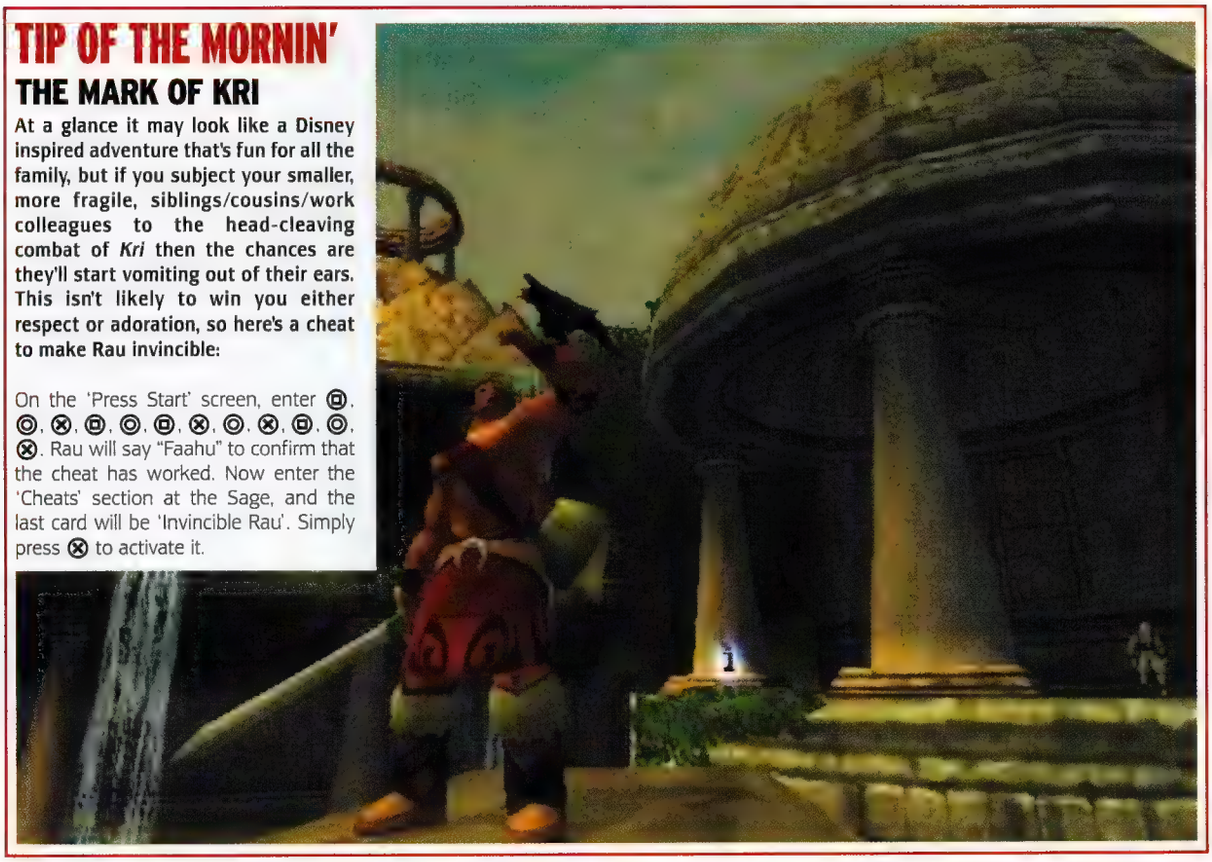
All skaters
When on the 'Press Start' screen, press ↑, ↓, ←, →, ↑, ↓, ←, →, ↑, ↓, ←, →, ◎. If the code has been entered correctly you'll hear a

TIP OF THE MORNIN'

THE MARK OF KRI

At a glance it may look like a Disney inspired adventure that's fun for all the family, but if you subject your smaller, more fragile, siblings/cousins/work colleagues to the head-cleaving combat of *Kri* then the chances are they'll start vomiting out of their ears. This isn't likely to win you either respect or adoration, so here's a cheat to make Rau invincible:

On the 'Press Start' screen, enter ◎, ◎, ⊗, ▣, ◎, ▣, ⊗, ◎, ⊗, ▣, ◎, ⊗. Rau will say "Faahu" to confirm that the cheat has worked. Now enter the 'Cheats' section at the Sage, and the last card will be 'Invincible Rau'. Simply press ⊗ to activate it.



sound. Now go to the character select screen and press ◎ on each character to reveal their hidden character or L1 for big-head mode.

Level select
When on the 'Press Start' screen, press L2, R2, ←, →, ←, →, ←, →, ↓, ↓, ↑, ↑, ↓, ↑. If the code has been entered correctly you'll hear a sound. Now go to the stage select screen and every stage for every character (even the hidden ones) will be unlocked and ready to skate.

DR MUTO

Finding it hard to make the most of an average game? Hey – try these…

Invincibility
Enter NECROSCI as a code.

Never take damage
Enter CHEATERBOY as a code.

All gadgets
Enter TINKERTOY as a code.

Secret morphs
Enter LOGGLOGG as a code.

All morphs
Enter EUREKA as a code.

Go anywhere
Enter BEAMMEUP as a code.

View FMV sequences
Enter HOTTICKET as a code.

Super ending
Enter BUZZOFF as a code.

STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS

It was nearly a half decent Star Wars game. But no, even a canvas as vast and epic as The Clone Wars seems to have had filthy brush water spilt over it by those 'artists' at LucasArts…

Invincibility
Enter DARKSIDE as a code.

Campaign level select
Enter DOORDONOT as a code.

Unlimited secondary and special weapon
Enter SUPERLASER as a code.

Three bonus objectives for current mission marked complete
Enter GIMME as a code.

Battle Droid unlocked in Academy: Geonosis level
Enter TRADEFED as a code.

Padme Amidala unlocked in Academy: Geonosis level
Enter NATALIE as a code.

Wookie unlocked in Academy: Geonosis level
Enter NERFHERDER as a code.

Programming team photographs
Enter JEDICOUNCIL as a code.

JAMES AND THE BRYANT PEACH

Sadly, we couldn't find anyone called James who was willing to be pictured alongside PSM2's fleshy Dep-Ed, but a lack of alternative comical influx meant we had to run with this anyway. You see, when Jonnie was at school, aside from playing the fruit (ha ha… er) in the assembly orchestra, he got his kicks playing Dungeons & Dragons with dorks. Well, 40 years on and he still loves his strategy games and, draw deep breath, he's got a peach of a cheat for *Battle Engine Aquila*. Take it away, Jonnie: "Ahem, right, simply start a new game and enter B4K42 as a name to unlock the God mode selection on the options screen. Juicy."

AR2 V2

THE BEST NEW CODES FOR YOUR ACTION REPLAY 2

You must enter the M code for these AR2 codes to work.

The Sims (M)
0E3C7DF2
1853E59E
EEAB1B22
BCDC7632

Games unlocked
DEA9003A
BCA99B84

Unlock Play The Sims
DEA900C2
BCA99B84

Unlock Party Motel
DEA900C6
BCA99B84

All objects free
DEA90032
BCA99B84

Never hungry
DEA42B12
BCA99B83

Always comfortable
DEA42B0A
BCA99B83

Always social
DEA42B1E
BCA99B83
DEA42B1A
BCA99B83

Always hygienic
DEA42B2E
BCA99B83
DEA42B2A
BCA99B83

Big heads
DEA900E2
BCA99B84

Blue characters
DEA900EA
BCA99B84

No censorship
DE828516
BF899B8B
DE828512
BCA99B83

Sly Raccoon (M)
0E3C7DF2
1853E59E
EE9EA2EA
BCA99C80

100 gold coins (press L2)
0E599878
BCA99982
CE968306
BCA99BE6

Infinite lives
CE96837E
BCA99BE6

All moves
CE96830E
BCA99A82

Open all maps
CE968FA6
BCA99BA4

Open all movies
CE96830A
BCA99A82
CE968316
BCA99A82

SOS: The Final Escape (M)
0E3C7DF2
1853E59E
EE81C92A
BCC6C83A

Infinite health
DEA48DFA
FE719B83
DEA48D86
FE7089F3

Maniac runner
DE8E3B96
F8ABDB03

Zero saves
DEBB4836
BCA99B83

Low time
DEBB4832
BCA99B83

Zero falls
DEBB483E
BCA99B83

Max distance
DEBB483A
14A9AA2E

Speedy moves
DE8ED6AE
F8ABDB03

PRO TIPS

"TEST AN EXPERT"

TEST... THE ALIEN GREY

He skates, he's ace, he comes from outer space – it's Evolution Skateboarding's very own flipkickin' Alien Grey!

DEAD RIDING HOOD: Don't suck at *BO2* - defeat Sarafan with our expert advice.

HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN

Dear PSM2

I have tried everything to get a Silent Assassin ranking on the 'Tracking Hayamoto' mission. Any ideas?
Stephen, via email

Wait behind that rock that you start behind until the guard waiting directly in front of the dojo goes inside and closes the door. When he does, start walking to the bush to your right. From the bush, run up the first garage door, open it and go inside, closing the door behind you.

Honk the horn on the car and hide behind the garbage can to the right of the door leading into the house. When the guard comes out, sneak into the house. Go to the room on the North-West side of the house with the exclamation point on the map – you will find a spare chef's uniform in there.

Walk forward and take the door on the right, move forward and take the door on the left. You should be facing a screen you can see a guard walking through. Go into sneak mode and when he walks past the door, open it and follow him, hugging the wall. As soon as you come to a door on the right, enter it and head to the North hallway.

Check your map for the two patrolling guards in this hall and when they're out of the way, enter the hall and make your way to the room with the disguise. Once you have the disguise, make your way to the kitchen.

Pass through the kitchen and the room with the exclamation point on the North-East side of the map, go up to the fish and cut it. If you were really quick with all your movements, another guard will have come in from that back door and will be making his way to the hall where you got your disguise. When he passes, go into sneak mode and keep your distance from him. Follow him back to the kitchen and place the poison fish and transmitter on the plate of Sushi on the bottom-left corner of the table, then hide in the fish room until you can escape.

Exit the house and make your way around to the first rock. Crouch down and make your way along the bushes towards the exit. The two guards will see you and shoot if you stand up or sneak past them. So, wait until they turn away from the exit and walk out.
Oooooh, whaaaaaa, keeekfleeep ...

BLOOD OMEN 2

Dear PSM2

Help me out and tell me how to kill the Sarafan Lord in *Blood Omen 2*. He keeps kicking my ass!
Adam Bradley, via email

When the Sarafan Lord starts hurling blue energy bolts at you, jump the first bolt, stand still for the second and jump the third. Then get yourself within jumping range and use your Telekinesis power to knock him off his platform. When he attacks you on the ground, block the first five hits (which will gradually build up your rage meter) and dodge the sixth. When your rage meter glows red, hit him in the middle of his six-hit combo with your Immolation Dark Gift and repeat four times. Finally, when he starts using his six-hit combo for the final assault, block the first five hits and dodge his sixth, then unleash your Fury power when he turns to face you again.
Whanoza, whaanoze, nozegraaab ...

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2

Dear PSM2

Despite putting in the hours on the training pitch, I just can't get Roberto Carlos' thunderous free kicks even remotely on target. Any tips?
Stu Marks, via email

Bearing in mind that the chunky-thighed ball-bender strikes the ball with his left boot, carefully aim your kick (imagining a straight line from his left foot towards goal) so that he is kicking slightly to the right or left of the defensive wall. Then, hold down the ⊡ button until you've obtained about a quarter to a third of the full power (keeping it low works best) and hold ↑ while Carlos is making his marathon run up. Then, the second he strikes the ball, stop pressing ↑ and hold down either ← or → (depending on which way you want to curve the ball towards goal).
Heelfleep, grinde, slide ... <crunch>

CARLOS THE TACKLE: Spoon it around the wall and in off the upright. Issss eeeasy!

BAFFLED?

SHARE THE BURDEN WITH PSM2...

Next month, we'll have an entirely new tips guru at the helm – like *DMC2*'s Lucia, perhaps. Or maybe just another non-English-speaking creature to save us from having to write any witty responses. Don't be shy, if you've got a gaming conundrum, send your query to .

Test an Expert, PSM2, Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. Or email it to PSM2@futurenet.co.uk.

BYTESIZE

SOS: THE FINAL ESCAPE: To prevent 'falling', you need to press R1 when a tremor occurs. However, even when you start to fall, a quick tap of the button will result in the fall animation being cancelled out.

EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING: To meet the big score challenges, stay rooted to the spot and press ⊗, quickly followed by ↑ + △ to land in a manual. Now, with ↑ + △ held at all times, keep pressing ⊗ followed by ⊡.

CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER: To get an extra 30 lives (to promptly lose), press ↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, L1, R1, L2 R2, L3, R3 on controller two at the title screen. A sound will confirm correct code entry.

THE SIMS: If you buy a telescope in *The Sims* and spend too long gazing through it, you'll get abducted by small blokes with big heads. And we're not talking about Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway, either.

DEVIL MAY CRY 2: In order to get those 'Show Time' ranks more easily, press △x3, → + △, △x2 and follow it up with △x3, ← + △, △x3. If some enemies are too far away, keep shooting them to keep your rank.

WAR OF THE MONSTERS: When playing on the Tsunopolis level, throw an object at the UFO hovering in the far corner and it'll blast into the sea, resulting in a tidal wave that will damage ground-based opponents.

EVERBLUE 2: To find the women's ID card needed for the chemist to make aspirin, go to the map, pinpoint the sea north of the island and dive in. Now turn around and swim south. The card will be next to the wall.

CRIME BOTCH UK

MC Lover's experiencing technical difficulties, so we're switching over to PC Bobby Spong at the Met for a *Getaway* traffic update

Evenin' all. What? The time? Free forty precisely. Right, due to a serious tailback of motorists flocking to our nation's capital looking for secret cars in *The Getaway*, we of 'Er Majesty's finest have decided to take the hunprecedented step of actively encouraging car crime by revealing their whereabouts.

Highlighted on this map are the locations of all the known secret cars in Free Roam mode (which you unlock by completing all 24 missions in the main game). If you know of any more that we haven't pinpointed, don't hesitate to contact me, PC Spong, care of PSM2 magazine at the usual address. Remember, drive carefully now!

KEY

- X You start here!
- 1 Skyline, M250, Go-kart, Cerbera
- 2 Peugeot 306
- 3 Golf Cart, Hijet
- 4 Lotus Esprit
- 5 Transit
- 6 Saab Concept
- 7 Armoured Car
- 8 Lotus 7
- 9 Skyline

WHEN IN ROAM: Travel in style with a selection of craftily concealed motors...

PSM2 PRO-DOJO

Welcome to the Dojo – the place where the hopeful strive to join PSM2's hallowed order of PlayStation 2 masters. Within these bamboo-and-paper walls you'll find only the greatest PS2 gamers. Join us…

NEW LEAGUES

WIN! **FEEL THE BURNOUT** *Burnout 2*'s where it's at this issue. We've had crate-loads of entries, so many perfectly respectable scores didn't get on to the table. There's still room for improvement though.

PROVE YOUR MASTERY!

Being a Ninja isn't easy. Merely finding out what qualifications you need or getting a couple of weeks' work experience can be a nightmare. Fortunately being one of PSM2's Pro Dojo Ninjas is rather easier. And there's none of that breaking tiles with your face business either.

Simply follow the guide below. It will help you get your score printed on these pages, and your face preserved forever on crisp DVD. PLUS! As if being hailed as one of the country's foremost button-bashers wasn't enough, we'll reward the greatest achievements this month with a game of your choice. **PSM2**

HOW TO BE FAMOUS!

1. Be really good at one of our challenge games. Have a look over the next four pages, read what the challenge is and decide if you can do better. If you can't even beat our tenth place offering, forget it… We only want new chart entries, and we update our listings every month.
2. Plug your PS2 into your video. Got the lead that came with your PS2? Use it to connect to your video's SCART socket or composite inputs (if you're using them). Switch to your TV's video channel then cycle through your video's inputs and you should see your PS2 lurking on one of them.
3. Load up your game of choice and find the music option. Turn this to zero – we want your game sound but no dodgy music, OK? Start recording and play your replay or begin playing the game. Do your best and, when you're done, record the high-score table or results screen for 30 seconds or so, so that we can see your performance easily. Finally, wind your tape to the beginning of your award-winning effort and write your name, challenge and score on the label on the tape (or stick a piece of paper on it).
4. Almost done. Now get a picture of yourself. Any picture. Naked. Fully clothed. We don't give a monkey's. You won't get in our Star Dojo players column (opposite) without one, and your appearance on the DVD will be shallow and worthless. Write your name on the back of the photo to ensure our postal computer doesn't lose it.
5. Fill in the form at the end of the section. We do accept photocopies (we can't bear to cut up our PSM2s either) and put all three things (your video, your photo and your entry form) in an envelope and post the lot to us. Good luck.

PRO DOJO CHECKLIST: BINGO!

☑ Photo ☑ Video ☑ Entry Form

The address is: Pro-Dojo, PSM2, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth St, BATH BA1 2BW, UK.

The closing date is Thursday 10th April. And, if you've already sent an entry, relax – we put the mag together ages before it hits the shops.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

The *GTA3* leagues have finally been retired, to make way for a couple of brand spanking new *Vice City* challenges. Get practising, and get those tapes in. We want to see how good you really are…

THE PCJ PLAYGROUND CHALLENGE

Activate the PCJ playground mission by hopping on to the bike that's leaning against the big grass-verged building near the Malibu Club (see Issue 31's DVD for more details). Now you've got two minutes to complete this tough 24-checkpoint course. No cheats now – this is a pure test of your bike skills. You can complete the course in any order you like, and the fastest times make it into the league. What are you waiting for? Send us your entire runs on VHS and get your face on our DVD.

FASTEST TIME

01'09"00	Steve Moran
01'10"00	Richard Hewat
01'13"00	Simon Douel
01'21"00	Garry Bee
01'52"00	Jeremy Matthews

THE CROSS-TOWN TRAFFIC CHALLENGE

Back by popular demand, the Cross-Town Traffic Challenge makes a very welcome return, this time taking in the sights of the glorious Vice City. As before, you can use any vehicle and any number of cheats you like – as long as you don't use any aircraft or the flying cars cheat.

Beginning at the Hyman Condo in the Downtown district, you must make your way to the Lighthouse in Ocean Beach. Drive right up to it, and hop off, or out of, the vehicle to finish. Go on, show us what you can do – and don't forget, we want to see your *whole* run, not just edited highlights, so get taping.

FASTEST TIME

01'37"00	Simon Douel
01'40"00	Simon Sherwood
01'45"00	Vin French
01'45"00	Richard Little
01'46"00	Garry Bee

HITMAN 2 SILENT ASSASSIN

Nothing less than Silent Assassin ranking will do to join this hallowed league. No alerts, no popping civilians – stealth-meisters only need apply.

ANATHEMA

3'55	Ibraheem Gedal
4'02"	John Turner
4'25"	Will Meredith
4'41"	Steve Moran
5'01"	Stephen Forbes

ST PETERSBURG STAKEOUT

5'28"	Will Meredith
5'39"	Ricky McLaughlin
6'25"	Tim Appleby
6'43"	Stephen Forbes
6'45"	Jonathan Smith Howell

KIROV PARK MEETING

3'56"	Ricky McLaughlin
4'52"	Steve Moran
5'47"	Will Meredith
6'18"	Stephen Forbes
7'59"	Joshua Stanard

INVITATION TO A PARTY

2'46"	Will Meredith
3'08"	Stephen Forbes
3'20	Steve Moran
8'23"	Adam Mayall
8'44"	Paul Brown
9'03"	Simon Codling

TRACKING HAYAMOTO

6'12"	Will Meredith
7'56	Steve Moran
8'43"	Toby Johnson
8'48"	Tomas Merriott
9'12"	Adam Savage

BURNOUT 2

No, no, no! No reversals please! Other than that, please do feel free to give any of these tracks mentioned here a spin in whatever motor you fancy.

AIRPORT TERMINAL 3

0'33"839	James Walker
0'34"000	Peter Jones
0'34"159	Daniel Hammond
0'34"179	Simon Douel
0'34"259	Paul McKenzie

AIRPORT TERMINAL 1&2

1'19"719	James Walker
1'20"459	Paul McKenzie
1'20"939	Simon Douel
1'21"349	David Peacock
1'21"579	Galvin Amis

INTERSTATE LOOP

1'00"579	James Walker
1'00"599	Daniel Hammond
1'00"760	Simon Douel
1'00"940	Jamie Bryson
1'01"139	Simon Brown

88 INTERCHANGE

2'21"720	Simon Brown
2'23"320	Simon Douel
2'23"559	James Walker
2'23"750	Paul McKenzie
2'24"039	Graham Wood

PALM BAY HEIGHTS

1'04"779	James Walker
1'05"640	Daniel Hammond
1'05"960	Simon Brown
1'06"200	Peter Jones
1'06"240	Simon Douel

PALM BAY MARINA

1'28"059	James Walker
1'28"459	Daniel Hammond
1'29"000	Simon Douel
1'29"100	Jamie Bryson
1'29"639	David Walker

SUNRISE VALLEY DOWNTOWN

0'41"540	James Walker
0'42"520	Daniel Hammond
0'43"139	Simon Brown
0'43"679	Peter Jones
0'43"800	Ibraheem Gedal

SUNRISE VALLEY SPRINGS

1'07"166	Paul McKenzie
1'07"579	
1'09"420	Alex Roe
1'11"159	Simon Brown
1'12"340	David Peacock

BIG SURF GROVE

1'07"399	James Walker
1'08"239	Simon Douel
1'09"281	Paul McKenzie
1'09"300	Ibraheem Gedal
1'09"549	David Peacock

BIG SURF SHORES

1'41"399	James Walker
1'42"659	Simon Douel
1'43"160	Simon Brown
1'43"540	Steve Moran
1'44"419	Chris Hill

CRYSTAL SUMMIT PEAK

0'42"359	James Walker
0'44"819	Simon Douel
0'45"179	Simon Brown
0'45"279	Steve Moran
0'46"233	Paul McKenzie

CRYSTAL SUMMIT LAKE

2'10"619	Simon Brown
2'10"980	Simon Douel
2'11"433	Paul McKenzie
2'13"020	Peter Jones
2'13"079	Graham Wood

OCEAN SPRINT

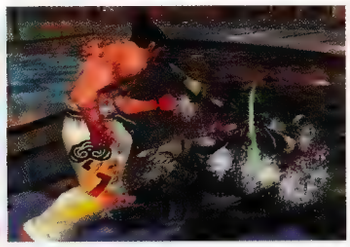
1'48"559	James Walker
1'52"079	Simon Douel
1'52"700	Paul McKenzie
1'53"899	Jimmy Mac
1'54"019	Peter Jones

HEARTBREAK HILLS

1'44"579	James Walker
1'47"279	Simon Douel
1'48"431	Paul McKenzie
1'49"039	Peter Jones
1'50"479	Simon Brown

FREEWAY DASH

2'07"579	Simon Douel
2'08"219	Peter Jones
2'11"533	Paul McKenzie
2'14"999	Dara Gray
2'16"319	Simon Brown

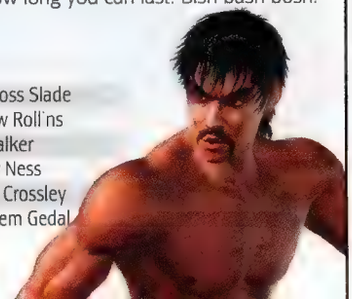


TEKKEN 4

Survival's the name of the game in our *Tekken 4* challenge. Pick your favourite combatant and see how long you can last. Bish bash bosh!

SURVIVAL MODE

Wins	Character	
63	Heihachi	John Ross Slade
39	Jin	Andrew Rollins
30	Lee	Lee Walker
29	Bryan	Ashley Ness
27	Law	Danny Crossley
27	Steve	Ibraheem Gedal



GRAN TURISMO 3

What's that – no new entries this month, Tommy? Say it ain't so! Freeride Arcade times is what we're after, so grab yourselves a pad and get going, speed freaks.

SUPER SPEEDWAY

0'24"306	Vaughan Welsh
0'25"339	Richard Little
0'26"696	Daniel Byatt
0'27"038	Ricky McLaughlin
0'27"701	Tommy Willumsen

MIDFIELD RACEWAY

0'54"581	Richard Little
0'57"409	Vaughan Welsh
0'57"426	Freddy Jenssen
0'57"726	Tommy Willumsen
0'57"799	James Gott

SMOKEY MOUNTAIN

0'49"403	Graham Greenall
0'49"582	James Walker
0'52"295	Vaughan Welsh
0'56"629	Christopher Hill
0'56"644	Chadi Samad
0'57"861	James Gott

TRIAL MOUNTAIN

1'04"681	Vaughan Welsh
1'06"337	Freddy Jenssen
1'06"478	Ricky McLaughlin
1'07"605	Tommy Willumsen
1'07"835	James Gott

SWISS ALPS

0'56"784	Kim Saarinen
0'58"669	Christopher Hill
1'02"484	James Walker
1'04"600	James Gott
1'04"681	Vaughan Welsh

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

Come on folks, we don't want to see repetitive one-trick wonders – keep it varied with a good spread of stunts. Steer clear of the Career mode, make full use of the terrain – and send us the proof on VHS.

COLLEGE

20,185,878	Daniel Mosley
18,834,222	Jake Douglas
9,456,020	Carl McCally
5,543,190	William Green
3,223,123	Charlie Cook

SAN FRANCISCO

17,882,326	Dan Bedwood
15,221,002	Jamie Morgan
6,667,943	Bob Travis
4,784,113	Martin Brooker
3,198,987	Ralph Evans

ALCATRAZ

22,562,021	Steve O'Neil
20,854,203	Jamie Morgan
19,441,000	Michael Polson
13,888,345	Tim Crosby
10,675,101	Doug Gysler

KONA

17,776,092	Liam Collet
15,722,178	Richard Garret
7,212,888	Jamie Morgan
7,100,567	Rob Bickley
5,789,322	James McKenzie

SHIPYARD

30,098,654	Alex Richardson
29,689,100	Nigel Brand
25,654,289	Vince Pratt
10,333,190	Brian Moore
8,000,145	Daniel Mosley

LONDON

10,417,894	Daniel Mosley
9,817,004	Mark Stone
8,296,332	Ray Warrel
7,016,070	David Smith
6,603,609	Peter Cramp

ZOO

15,257,134	Ian Gillingham
14,226,239	Jensen Holzer
12,009,876	Morris Eade
12,000,006	Paul Jallif
8,789,333	Christian Scott

CHICAGO

15,603,342	Charles Windstaff
15,057,642	Steve O'Neil
12,876,174	Tony Harrison
7,631,597	Rodney Cox
6,647,324	Mathew Jones

CARNIVAL

16,445,408	Paul Dennis
14,486,987	Jonathan Griffiths
14,005,679	Rodney Cox
10,757,442	Martin Prince
8,164,597	Robert Brent

IN THE DOJO

PLACES FOR FACES

WINNER **JOHN ROSS SLANE**
Way out ahead...

We're betting that John's *Tekken* score is going to top the table for months. It's *24 wins higher* than his nearest rival. It'll take some beating. (Geddit?)

WINNER! **JAMES WALKER**
Speed Walker

A few more victories and James would be ready to conquer the world. Or at least declare himself King of *Burnout 2*. Surely you won't sit back and let that happen?

WINNER! **SIMON DOUEL**
Hit and run

Vice City, *Burnout 2*, *TimeSplitters 2*... Most people have trouble succeeding at just one game. but not Simon. But what prize do you give the man who's got it all?

WINNER! **RICKY MCLAUGHLIN**
Attack of the killer badger

Besides an obvious penchant for bizarre hairdos and dodgy facial hair, Ricky's a dab hand at *Burnout 2* and... oh. *Hitman 2*. We didn't mean it about the badger...

WINNER! **STEVE MORAN**
Tubs o' fun

Steve fought and drove his way on to four of our tables this issue. We're sending him *The Sims* so he can meet new people without leaving his PS2.

Once again it's the game of your choice fellas. Mail in your requests and we'll sort them out for you sharpish. As for the rest of you wannabees, get those entries in for an equal chance of gaming immortality and a brand new selection of prizes next issue.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3

We've gone for the UK-only stages for this one, although you *can* opt for whichever ride and driver you want to get dirty with...

TOP TIMES

Warwick

2'50"49	Giles Kilpatrick
2'51"84	Rodger Woods
2'52"07	Derek Stocks
2'53"01	Robert Tyler
2'53"06	William Sykes

Stone Leigh

2'57"20	Rik Ibbotson
3'00"92	Robert Tyler
3'01"44	Paul Curry
3'02"38	Tom Norlund

Little Cawford

2'18"52	Rik Ibbotson
2'18"62	Peter Radcliff
2'18"88	Derek Stocks
2'19"23	Simon Mathews
2'22"04	Sam Leveritt

Llangurig

3'05"96	Rik Ibbotson
3'06"40	Robert Tyler
3'34"65	Carl Thompson
3'39"87	John Midgely
3'40"45	Rodger Woods

Llyn Clywedog

2'21"06	Rik Ibbotson
2'22"40	Robert Tyler
2'23"68	Chris Lewis
2'23"87	John Townsend
2'25"05	Chris Worrell

Rhayader

2'53"72	Rik Ibbotson
2'54"24	Shaun Henderson
2'54"43	Daniel O'Sullivan
2'54"78	Paul Curry
2'56"00	Charles Abram

Stonetthorpe

1'16"20	Rik Ibbotson
1'16"52	William Sykes
1'17"73	Lee Burton
1'17"96	Donney McCallum
1'18"32	Carl Thompson

CRAZY TAXI

Hey, hey, hey! It's ancient but you're still loving making that crazy money. Get out there and earn top dollar.

ARCADE MODE

$68,750.44	James Hall
$65,000.00	Stuart Morrison
$61,563.30	John Keighley
$49,445.00	Paul Fletcher
$41,595.48	Ben Raffles

VIRTUA FIGHTER 4

First, make sure you've fulfilled the criteria, then send us the video evidence to prove that you're the master of the bare-knuckle brawl.

SURVIVAL MODE

Win Rate	Wins	Ranking	Character	
100%	1257	High King	Not stated	David Peacock
98%	1137	xxx	Vanessa	Dean Cash
98%	1056	xxx	Shun	Johnny Martin
97%	1122	xxx	Kage	Gareth Young
92%	978	xxx	Lion	Sam Vincent

TIMESPLITTERS 2

You'll notice a couple of changes with the challenges here, thanks to folk sending in such a broad spread of results. Keep 'em coming!

GLASS SMASH

Bricking It

22.2	Tim Cooper
22.8	Josef Holden
24.1	Joseph Gallagher
24.4	Richard Hewat
24.4	Michael Hunt

INFILTRATION

Trouble At The Docks

57:02:80	Cabe Karthy
57:55:64	Carl Woodard
58:25:22	Simon Mathews
58:45:82	Ian Johnson
59:36:13	Richard Ludbrook

BANANA CHOMP

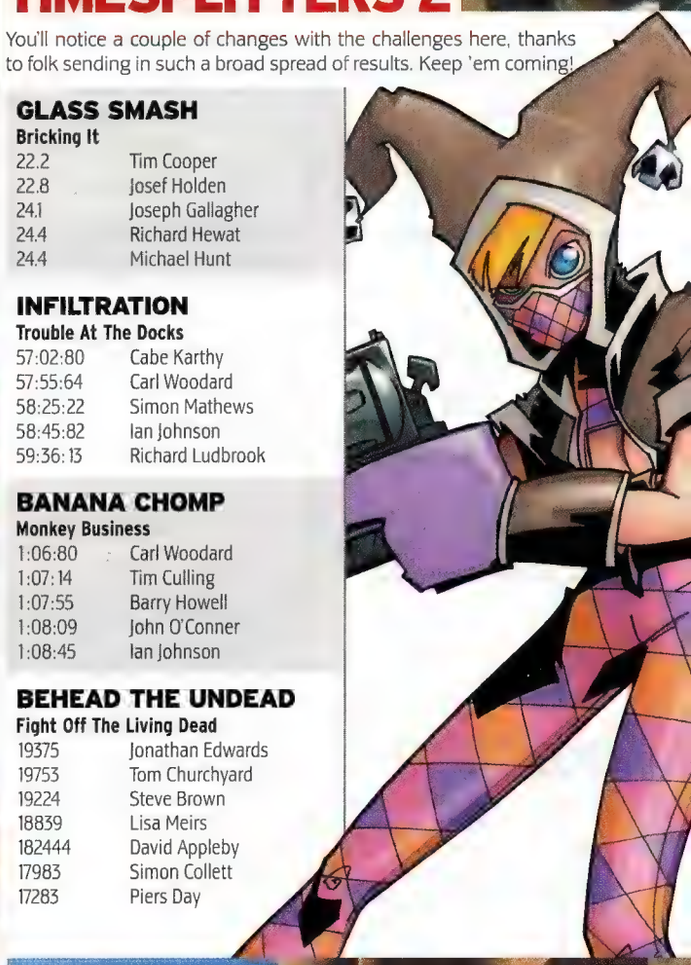
Monkey Business

1:06:80	Carl Woodard
1:07:14	Tim Culling
1:07:55	Barry Howell
1:08:09	John O'Conner
1:08:45	Ian Johnson

BEHEAD THE UNDEAD

Fight Off The Living Dead

19375	Jonathan Edwards
19753	Tom Churchyard
19224	Steve Brown
18839	Lisa Meirs
182444	David Appleby
17983	Simon Collett
17283	Piers Day



SSX TRICKY

All quiet on the slopes this month, but we reckon there's plenty of life left in this golden oldie yet. Stat up your boarder however you like, then leap suicidally off any of the mountains below. Banzai!

TOP SCORES

Snowdream

1,813,890	Alex Sandison
1,701,450	Alex Sandison
1,557,780	Jonathan Minott

Elysium Alps

2,730,740	Austin O'Toole
2,629,495	Sam Payne
2,591,760	Jeff Bell

Merqury City

2,828,640	Alex Sandison
2,594,165	Austin O'Toole
2,265,770	Sam Payne

Mesablanca

1,500,890	Alex Sandison
1,435,645	Austin O'Toole
1,059,970	Lee Walker

Tokyo Megaplex

31,714,410	Lee Walker
2,409,945	Alex Sandison
2,198,630	Austin O'Toole

Pipedream

2,531,230	Austin O'Toole
2,325,820	John Norman
2,312,200	Anthony Portch

Garibaldi

2,133,850	Alex Sandison
1,983,820	Austin O'Toole
1,947,200	Chris Abnett

Alaska

2,123,410	Alex Sandison
2,075,255	Amanda Offord
1,837,801	Jeff Bell

TOP TIMES

Snowdream

1'47"93	Austin O'Toole
2'05"10	Frederick Astier
2'06"55	Alex Duffy

Elysium Alps

3'26"16	Austin O'Toole
3'28"38	Simon Baggott
3'30"14	Frederick Astier

Merqury City

2'31"26	Austin O'Toole
3'28"76	Gareth Russell
3'29"43	Carl Musgrove

Mesablanca

2'13"58	Austin O'Toole
2'16"74	Lee Walker
2'29"54	Andy Lyle

Tokyo Megaplex

2'26"44	Austin O'Toole
3'15"13	Dean Edwards
3'21"68	Damian Lobbet

Aloha Ice Jam

1'32"99	Austin O'Toole
1'37"64	Alex Duffy
1'40"75	Carl Musgrove

Garibaldi

2'38"54	Austin O'Toole
2'39"54	Carl Musgrove
2'40"43	Gareth Russell

Alaska

4'06"23	Andrew Stone
4'14"21	Austin O'Toole
4'23"56	Frederick Astier

A POLITE NOTICE

As you can imagine, we get sent hundreds of tapes every month, and while you can rest assured that we *do* go through them *all*, magazine deadlines mean they might not turn up as early as you're expecting. *Please* don't ring us up, as we're not going to know offhand if you're currently top of the leaderboard, and we're less funny when we're tetchy.

DEAD OR ALIVE 2

DOA2's much more than just realistically jiggling lady bumps. Get stuck into our challenges to see if your skills are up to the task.

SURVIVAL MODE

100 Wins	Daniel Drysdale
59 Wins	Carl Robinson
47 Wins	Stephen Rutter

TIME ATTACK MODE

1'12"84	Bryan Henriquez
1'14"72	Jan M de Vlas
1'17"27	David R Holt

METAL GEAR SOLID 2 SUBSTANCE

It's out in the shops in a couple of weeks time, but we've already had a bundle of entries for the Snake VR missions from our keenest...

SNEAK LV.5

01'57"10	Alastair Berger
01'59"17	Lance Miers
02'02"56	Ewan McMorran

ELEMINATE ALL LV.5

01'42"86	Julian Leggett
01'43"11	Peter Hughes
01'55"34	Willaim Ashford

WEAPON: ASSAULT LV.5

27445	Thomas Wood
25312	Garath Savage
22807	Charles Wyatt

WEAPON: NIKITA LV.5

01'26"88	Giles Plumb
01'33"19	Gareth Plumb
01'47"44	Shaun Wright

FPS MODE LV.1

10781	Warren Porritt
9187	Nicholas Eastwood
8666	Andrew Johnson

FPS MODE LV.2

02'53"68	Douglas Goldsmith
02'55"75	Sam Hall
03'01"44	Lee Green

FPS MODE LV.3

10,012	Jonathan Stannard
9,855	Peter Camp
9,832	Darren McMorran

THINK YOU CAN DO BETTER?

Then fill in the form, send us a message to print – as long as it's witty – and make sure you're as good as you think you are.

STATE OF EMERGENCY

These crazed maniacs can't get enough of our *SOE* league. Can you do any better? Well, can you?

THE CAPITOL CITY MALL

3-Minute Kaos

2,356,300	John Keighley-Bray
1,642,800	Daryl Turnbull
724,700	Carl Robinson

Last Man Standing

2.50	John Keighley-Bray
3.09	Sean Bedford
4.26	Anthony Rose

CHINATOWN

3-Minute Kaos

3,100,700	John Keighley-Bray
1,434,400	Daryl Turnbull
538,000	Danny Barham

Last Man Standing

3.29	John Keighley-Bray
5.07	Dean Cash
5.17	Anthony Rose

EAST SIDE

3-Minute Kaos

2,165,900	John Keighley-Bray
574,300	Danny Barham
532,700	Carl Robinson

Last Man Standing

1.51	John Keighley-Bray
2.49	Anthony Rose
3.21	Andrew Cooper

CORPORATION CENTRAL

3-Minute Kaos

2,005,200	John Keighley-Bray
625,500	Carl Robinson
608,400	Anthony Rose

Last Man Standing

3.57	John Keighley-Bray
8.35	Anthony Rose
10.33	Sean Bedford

PRO DOJO ENTRY FORM

PSM2, PRO DOJO, FUTURE PUBLISHING, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH BA1 2BW

Dear PSM2,
I'd like to join your elite order of shadow warriors. Please. I can bring my own blowpipe and everything.

And I enclose... MY PHOTO ❑ **A VIDEO OF MY ACHIEVEMENT ❑ (Now put me on your DVD!)**

I've got the following scores...

Game Score

Name
Age
Address

PRO TIPS

TRAINING YOU IN THE DARK ARTS OF PLAYSTATION 2

SPLINTER CELL

PART 1 **STEALTHY!** Like a venerable old chameleon, we show you how to glide undetected through the first three missions, outlining a few tricks of the trade along the way. Shhh! You ain't seen us, right?

Tom Clancy's SPLINTER CELL

AIM OF THE GAME

You are a one-man terrorist pacifier decked out to the hilt with high-tech gadgetry. Your aim is to thwart a techno-war by visiting enemy hotspots and creeping silently and invisibly past perceptionally-challenged guards and security cameras. Stealing top-secret data, filling darkened closets with a piles of heavies and looking damn stylish doing it, is all in a day's work for our hero, Sam Fisher.

SPLINTER WONDERLAND

Although the levels are linear, there's always more than one method of getting through. It pays to look for alternate methods of bypassing problem areas as raised alarms and enemy interest could throw your whole mission into jeopardy. Tread carefully, know what's beyond the next door and, if all else fails, whip out your shooter. This first part outlines the best passages through the levels and gets you used to utilising your surrounds. See you – or rather not – next month for more.

WHAT WE SAID...

PSM2 ISSUE #33 March 2003

"Better than *MGS2*? The key point is that it's different – equally enjoyable and absorbing, but with a fresh take on stealth concepts."

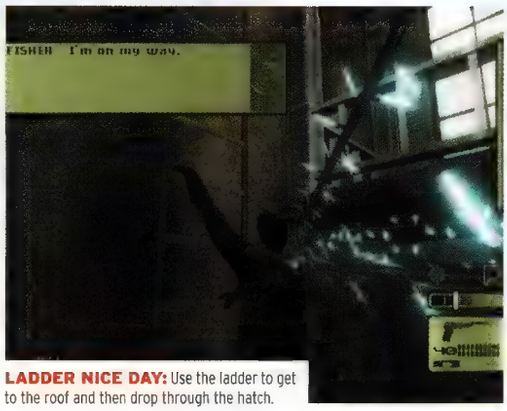
WHAT WE SAY NOW

The ultimate 'boys-with-toys' action adventure that makes the leap to PS2 seem effortless – even if it did have to shed some bulk to make it.

91

MISSION #1: POLICE STATION

When you begin, head across to the right and up the steps. Here you'll find a metal ladder hanging from the wall, so press ⓐ to jump up and grab it and then climb it to the roof. Open the small hatch and drop through, switch to your night-vision goggles and crawl through the tight passage. When the passage opens out, climb up the pipe and then use the zip line to get over to the adjacent building. Go through the door and then through the other door to the right. Proceed through the room and out the doorway at the far end.



LADDER NICE DAY: Use the ladder to get to the roof and then drop through the hatch.

WALKIE TALKIE: While the guard jabbers on his radio, creep up silently and grab him.

Head out into the stairwell and go down, then jump up and grab the pipe above the corridor to shimmy over the flames. Follow the corridor around and go through the door before cutting diagonally left through the next room, out the door and then up the stairs. Go through the door at the top and interact with the informant – who is lying mortally wounded in amongst the rubble.

When you're done talking, go out the door on the west wall and head into the next available room. The smoke in here is thick so you'll need to shoot out the glass skylight to get some fresh air circulating before running through to the door to the right. After going through you'll hit a save point.

Go out the door and follow the balcony around to the left. When you reach the end, grab hold of the overhanging pipe and shimmy across, pressing ◎ to bring up your legs to clear the fence on the other side of the alley. Head along the passage and you'll hear the nearby guard start talking on his radio. While he is doing so, crouch down and creep through the flower bed.

When you reach the porch of the house, jump over the fence and resume crouching. Now creep up on the guard and grab him. If the guard inside the house becomes alerted and opens the doors, use the first guard as a bullet shield by holding him in front of you, then simply hold down R2 to aim at the second guard to bump him off. If the second guard doesn't get alerted, simply whack the guard you are holding, hide his body in the darkness and go into the house, being cautious so as not to alert the second guard.

Use the computer and head out through the back. Pick up the medical kit on the way to the room with the 'nice' blue wallpaper and then interact with the picture. Use the computer and then tap in the code on the keypad next to the door opposite.

Use the zip line to get across to the next building, and then head into the lift shaft. Do a running jump to grab the cable and then slide down to the bottom. Then open the hatch to reach another crucial save point.

Lockpick your way out of the door and you can tackle the next bit one of two ways. You can either shoot the two guards in front of the sleeping drifter or jump onto the small wooden edge at the top of the steps and

OUT WITH A HANG: Use the ledge to sneak quietly past the drunk-hassling guards.

SHIELD OF SCREAMS: Grab the civilian and use them to help bump off the two guards.

HACKED OFF: Interact with any PC you see to glean vital information...

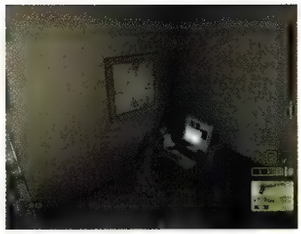
WALL OR NOTHING: Get on the skip and double jump up to get over the station wall.

SPLIT UP: Shoot the lights and split-jump up before performing a falling kill on the guard.

edge your way out next to the wall to grab hold of the ledge running along the face of the building. Now simply shimmy your way along, past the two guards with their backs to you and drop off at the very end before creeping up the slope.

Head through the fountain area and into the bushes to the right at the far end. Crouch through the gap and then use the computer in the small room (there are two medical kits in here as well, along with some ammo). Head back out into the fountain area, avoid the guard who's there and creep down the newly-opened passage right next to you to reach a checkpoint.

Creep down the alley, avoiding the patrolling civilians and hide in between the two skips. Wait for the civilian to pass before grabbing him, then drag him round the corner to confront the guard. While using the civilian as a shield, cap the guard in the head (and search his satchel for a data stick), followed by the next one further down the alley, knock out the civilian and then dump all three bodies in between the skips (remember to hide all bodies in the shadows – otherwise you'll get found out later). Head into the yard and jump on to the skip, then double jump to grab hold of



the wall, haul yourself over and drop down into the adjacent yard to reach a save point.

Head down the steps and through the door. As you open it, the guard should turn away and start walking back through the cell block. Creep up behind him and wait for him to disappear into his station, then shoot out the lights to create a stealthier environment. Now either hide in the shadows to tackle the guard when he re-appears or shoot him outright. Take care of the second guard, drag both bodies into the first guard's station, use the computer and turn out the lights before leaving.

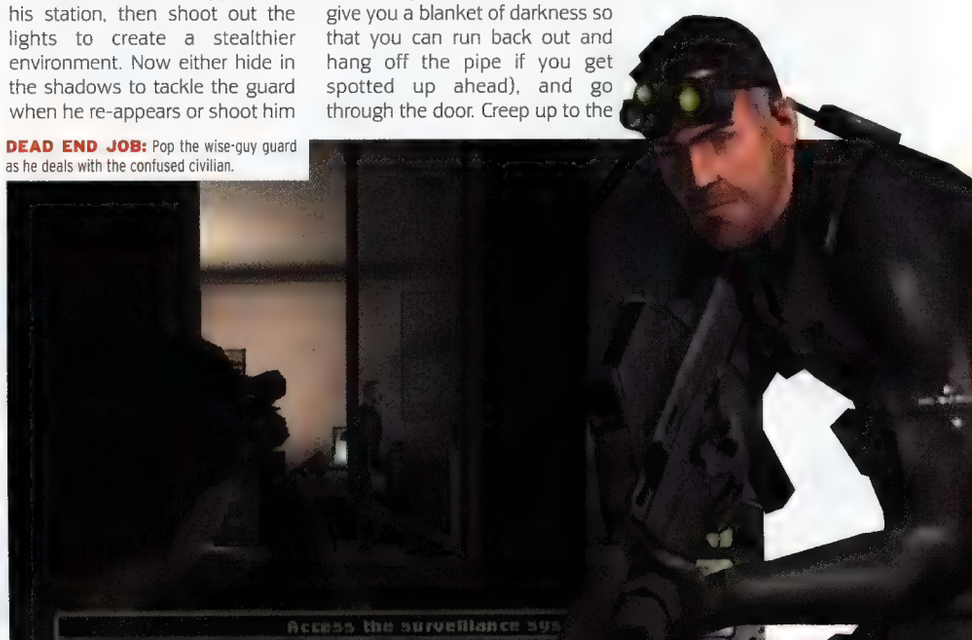
As you head around the corner, duck beneath the window and creep into the room, grab the agent and interrogate him.

Use the nearby computer and go through the door into the morgue. Shoot the camera above the bed, take the medical kit and walk over to the dead agents.

Head back out and go through the last door to reach a save point.

Go up the fire escape, shoot out the light at the top (this will give you a blanket of darkness so that you can run back out and hang off the pipe if you get spotted up ahead), and go through the door. Creep up to the edge of the office and listen to the conversation. Pop the guard through the side window, and then chase and grab the civilian. Hide both bodies in the office, take the medical kit, use the computer and turn out the lights as you leave. Head up the next set of stairs for a checkpoint and creep into the room so as not to alert the two desk-bound guards.

Knock each one out in turn and use the computer, then head out the back door very quietly. Creep through the sheet screen, knock out the last guard before using the computer, then head back downstairs and out the double doors opposite the office.



DEAD END JOB: Pop the wise-guy guard as he deals with the confused civilian.

MISSION #2: DEFENCE MINISTRY

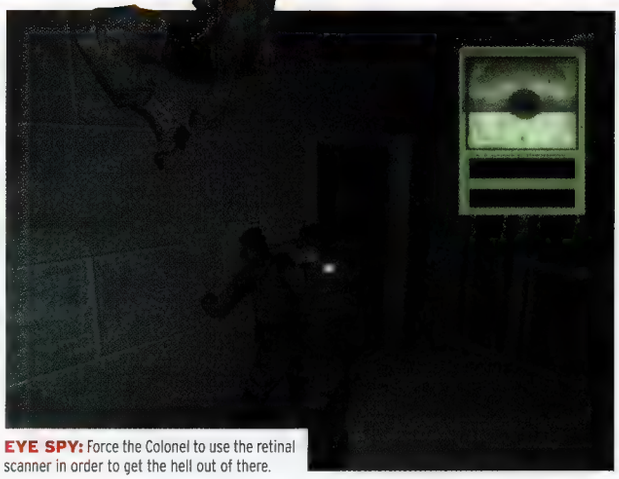
Approach the small chimney up ahead and interact when you see the option to 'rappel on wall'. Press ⊗ to begin abseiling down and when you reach the window, hold △ and swing yourself in.

Wait at the end of the bookshelf until the guard goes in to take a book. Take him out by whatever means when he heads back to his chair – but watch out for the camera opposite. Examine the computer and leave the room, then use your optic cable on the next door to check the location of the guard. When he starts walking away, go through and tail him until you reach a door on the left – go through it.

Go up the stairs to get a medical kit and then go down to the basement. Watch as you go because there's a camera at the bottom of most flights of stairs, so edge down carefully and shoot them before you get spotted. When you get to the bottom you'll hit a checkpoint.

Go through the door and shoot the camera straight ahead, then go slowly into the next area to see the driver. Shoot the second camera which is on the wall across from the driver's car and edge down to the wall where it is positioned. It's important that you stay away from the cars as their alarms will get you busted – and you'll fail the mission.

Shoot the fire hydrant to attract the driver's attention, and then grab and interrogate him when he investigates. Keep him held as a guard will enter the door you came in by, so use the driver as a bullet shield and take him out. Hide both bodies in dark corners and head back up the main corridor. Grab and eliminate the guard who's right behind the door as you emerge, and go through the door on the right down the end. Tread carefully as there's a camera right above the door. Use the computer and jump up into the air vent to reach a save point.



EYE SPY: Force the Colonel to use the retinal scanner in order to get the hell out of there.

When you emerge from the vent, creep to the edge of the freezer room and wait for the guard to leave the kitchen (after a scene from The World's Worst Kitchens 7). Sneak out and choke the chef before turning out the light, going through the door and grabbing the guard. Hide both bodies in the freezer and go down the steps.

Head down the steps to the right when the patrolling guard is facing away and then jump over the banisters about halfway down before creeping into the shadows at the back of the wall.

TOP DUMPS: To avoid sounding alarms later, hide all bodies in dark places...

DEAD MAN STALKING: Use this computer twice to get all the info you need.

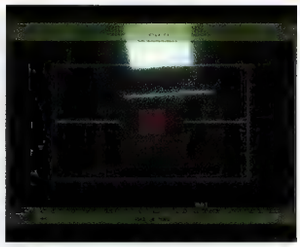
Creep out and grab the guard who's behind the desk before using him as a bullet shield to nail his mate. Hide both bodies in the shadows and use the computer.

When the Colonel comes down from upstairs and sits at the desk, grab him and force him to use the retinal scanner. Dump his body and go through the door to reach a checkpoint.

Shoot the camera above the door and go through, then head down to the bottom of the gardens to the left. Utilise your laser mic and point it at the elevator to eavesdrop on the conversation, then keep moving it to follow the lift up.

When that objective is finally complete, guards will enter the courtyard, so watch your back. Go to the right of the door opposite the one you entered the gardens by, and climb up the fencing to reach a save point.

You are confronted with a descending lift with a couple of machine-gun-toting guards inside, so act quickly. You can either double jump up to the beam above you, or run to the right and hide in the shadows. When the second guard comes out, heads your way and then turns around and follows his mate, sneak into the lift and go up. As soon as the lift doors open, head left and start picking the lock on the door. A guard will arrive shortly, so your aim here is to be in the room before he emerges. Once inside, turn off the lights and use the computer. Then jump on to the desk and up into the air vent.



When you drop down, shoot the camera directly ahead and then go into the store room on the left. Take the medical kit and ammo before climbing the ladder and heading out onto the roof.

Rappel onto the small chimney and abseil down it until you are on the large office window. Press △ and swing out to crash through it and then immediately draw your weapon and shoot the guard.

When you use the computer, another guard will come quickly, so shoot both the lights and wait behind the door for him to come in before dealing with him as you see fit. Use the computer a second time before leaving the room and reaching a checkpoint.

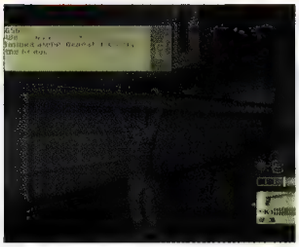
You will emerge back near the store room, so there is no need to shoot the camera as you will have already disposed of it.

Go through the door just down from the store room (with the red light above it) and head downstairs. Take the medical kit and go through the door – checking first that the coast is clear via your optic cable.

Kill or dodge the guard and jump into the lift shaft, grabbing hold of the cable and sliding all the way down to the bottom. Now simply run around the corner to meet up with your buddy and complete the mission.

DONE DEAL: Move on to the next mission...

MISSION #3: OIL REFINERY



Head up the ladder that's straight ahead and then edge on to the pipes. Cling on to the overhanging pipe and then raise your legs to get past the girder. When you come to the generator barricade, edge off the end of the narrow walkway to the right and cling onto it. Now simply shimmy under the generator. Haul yourself up on the other side and duck under the next obstacle to trigger a checkpoint.

Walk onto the platform to the right and use the zip line. Duck under the large pipe and then climb up the pole. Drop off onto the large pipe and walk forwards into the hole. Crawl up the pipe until you reach a save point.

Walk up to the fan and climb the ladder. After the cutscene, turn 90° to the right and walk forwards to cling on to the girder. Haul yourself up, turn to the right and follow the beam along to the staircase. You won't be able to get to the stairs from this side, so edge off the girder, grab hold of it as you fall and shimmy underneath the walkway with the steps on. Once under it, haul yourself up, jump over the fence and go up the steps.

Shoot the guard at the top and then head along the walkway to reach another save point.

Wait until the technician and his guard are out of the picture (wait a good minute or so to be sure), and shoot the guard crouched down in front of the flames up ahead. Search his satchel then go through the short passage and take a right.

Go left at the end and creep after the technician, then grab the bottle next to the high pressure water tank, wait for the technician to disappear and throw the bottle around the corner to attract the guard. Kill him and wait by the doorway until the technician and his guard have come back around from the dead-end and pass the doorway.

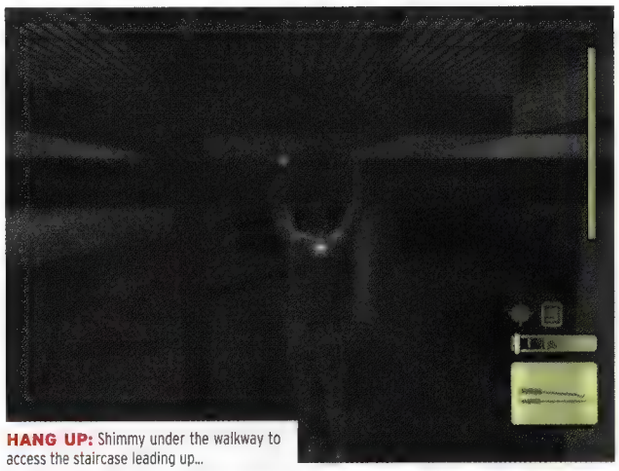
OIL BE DAMNED: Shoot the crouching guard and stick close to the technician.

Head into the room and go left. Take the medical kit from the table and head out back into the kitchen for another one before leaving the room. Go left and head around the corner for another checkpoint.

Go up to the large red generator on the right and jump on top. Grab hold of the pipe and shimmy into the room, raising your legs to squeeze. When you see the technician leave in the cutscene, press ◎ to lower your legs and then draw your gun. Get a good head-shot on the remaining guard and then drop down to get the medical kit and ammo. Now head upstairs to see another cutscene.

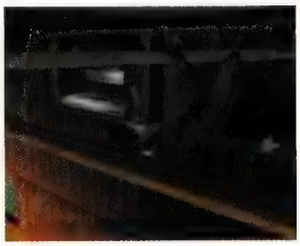
There are two guards at the top of the stairs – one is patrolling around in front of you and the other is on a raised platform up to the left. You can take them out by shooting the nearby fuel drums. Search their satchels and then go through the opening straight ahead. Go right, head around to the stairs and go down, shooting the guard through the metal fence at the bottom before going through the gate. You are now back where you started.

Go through the door on the left, take the medical kit and head out through the back door. Go around to the left and just around the next corner you'll find the technician cowering in a corner. Grab and interrogate him. Search his satchel and grab the briefcase to complete the mission.



HANG UP: Shimmy under the walkway to access the staircase leading up...

TECH SPECS: Trail the technician, but wait for him to walk past before giving chase.



HEADS-UP: While hanging from the pipe, off the guard in one with a stylish head shot.

PART 2 COMING NEXT ISSUE!

DEVIL MAY CRY 2

PART 1 **DEVILISH** Whack, whack – pantpuffgasp – whack – FATOOMCH! There you go, all the advice you'll ever need to complete *DMC2* in five hours flat. But, if you want to condense that time, get involved with this guide for both characters.

AIM OF THE GAME

All hell's a poppin' and both Dante and Lucia are on a mission to expose *the* evil corporation and its diabolic master, Arius. Which involves plenty of wandering about and wall crawling until you end up in the boss arena facing yet another manifestation from the fiery pit. Demons, huge moths, disembodied faces... Nothing to fear from any of them as long as you sprinkle holy water over this guide and fashion it into a crucifix.

GRIM WEAPER

No point crying into your velvet collar about the locations of all the weapons... we simply don't have room this issue. Also, at a measly five hours, we've got to leave you something to keep the ol' interest levels up, or perhaps a new set of stripey strides is all you really need to keep going.

So here, for your delectation, is a tour of both discs and their bosses with just enough hidden extras to whet your appetite for destruction...

WHAT WE SAID...

PSM2 ISSUE #33 March 2003

"*DMC2* is a solid title with plenty of action. But the original set new standards for this genre, and this isn't quite as cool or as polished."

WHAT WE SAY NOW

It's actually much tougher on the second go, but somehow the idea of doing the whole thing again with Lucia just isn't enough incentive. Dang

72

DANTE MISSION GUIDE

MISSION 1

Head right and follow the slope right down to the end of the street. Examine the door for Secret Room #1 and then head up the street on the left. Jump over the building and then check the door for Secret Room #2.

DOG GONE: Get up close and go nuts with Rebellion to take out large groups of enemies.

MISSION 2

In the room with the Red Orb Generator, examine the coffin for Secret Room #3 and once you've battled against the Pyromancers, examine the coffin next to the Red Orb for Secret Room #4.

DOOR BLIMEY: You'll need to smash your way through lots of doors here.

MISSION 3

When you start, head around the corner to the dead-end area and search the balcony for a Blue Orb. Then as you go down the hill towards the station, examine the door on the right about half-way down for Secret Room #5.

BIRD IT ALL BEFORE: Lock onto these flying freaks with Ebony and Ivory.

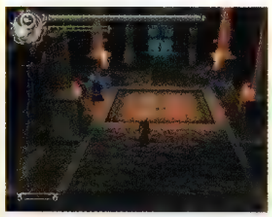
BOSS 1

Orangguerra

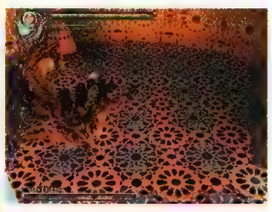
Orangguerra is extremely agile, so light him up from afar with your guns and do your best to avoid his leaping attacks. If he manages to grab you, switch to Devil Trigger mode in order to get him to let go. It's worth noting that he often gets stuck on the furnishings, so put obstacles between you and him whenever you can to impede his progress. After the fight, grab the key, go back outside and head through the door with angels carved onto it.

MISSION 4

Climb through the window just to the right of the second streetlight to find Secret Room #6. Follow the alleyway and break through the wooden barricade. Beyond that, you'll find a building to the right and a switch further down the path that opens the building's portcullis. Enter the building at the end of the dock and get the Quick Heart (and a Gold Orb). Use this to get through the portcullis but not before visiting Secret Room #7 behind the orb generator.



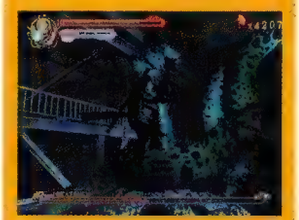
DOOM & ROOM: Examine the skull on the right for a secret room.



BOSS 2

Jokatgulin

The trick with this one is to stick to the edges of the screen as her attacks can be dodged from far away with a simple jump. Unload on the tentacles and, eventually, one will disappear leaving you a route to get to her neck. That's when you rush in and blast away. If she breathes purple gas, get out of there – it's poison.



SICK SQUID: Lop off those tentacles from afar then move in close for the kill.

MISSION 5/BOSS 3

Freki & Geri/ Infested Helicopter

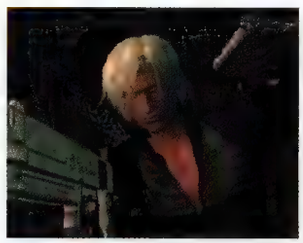
When you leave the tunnel, make your way to the first door on the right for Secret Room #8 before heading through the side-tunnel. Examine the second door on the right after the bridge for Secret Room #9 and then jump over the tanker to get to the next area. The tanks are easy as long as you avoid both guns and you'll find Secret Room #10 through the door across the street from the burning truck. You can also find the Offence Heart here by jumping over the pile of rubble next to the burning truck and also a Blue Orb at the top of the steep slope where one of the tanks was situated. When the Infested Helicopter arrives, run like the wind. Run off to the right of the initial screen and follow the camera up through the building. Jump off the helipad on to the building with the carving on it and then on to the roof of the big brown building (there's a Gold Orb between the two buildings). The helicopter goes down fast in Devil Mode – just avoid its missiles and remember to use your shotgun from afar.

ROCKET WATCH: When Dante meets Rocket Launcher, demons beware.

MISSION 6/BOSS 4

Nafasturris/Nefascapitis

Run up close, jump over his beam, and pump him full of lead or pound on him. You may take a couple of hits from his bursting attack near the end, but that's it. When he transforms, wait until he lands, then roll or jump to avoid his attacks. Smack him from above or behind to finish him.



ERROL TWIN: Ebony & Ivory are the sharpest shooters, until you get the twin Uzis...

TATE & BILE: Evade its electrical blasts and then gradually wear it down with your shotgun.

GOAT, OOH HELL: Blast it with your shotgun and double jump to avoid its attacks.

MISSION 7

There's a Gold Orb hidden in the area with four fuel tanks standing together – it's in the centre. When you reach the bottom of the elevator shaft, recharge your Devil Gauge and then flap up to get the Flame Heart. Then, in the room with the lava, land on the platform in the middle and open the door to grab the Vendetta Sword before examining the ledge to the left for Secret Room #11. When you go up in the elevator, Secret Room #12 is through the door to the left.

MISSION 8/BOSS 5

Furiataurus

Furiataurus is easily one of the coolest-looking bosses in the whole game, but his attacks are all short-range. Perforate him from afar, and when he charges at you, leap up and come down upon him from behind before quickly retreating again.

MISSION 9

When you get to the massive aircraft hangar, go inside the plane and get the Rocket Launcher from the crate. Then go back out and escape through the hole that the plane makes in the large fan up ahead.

MOTH-ARGH: This beast is harmless, but you have to kill it to stop the flow of eggs.

MISSION 10/BOSS 6

Noctpteran & Larvae

Examine the skull pillar to the right of the pit for Secret Room #13, then use the Quick Heart to hit both trigger orbs. The ensuing boss battle can be a tough one – Noctpteran is little trouble but, as long as she's alive, she'll drop eggs that quickly become revolting giant larvae. Stay airborne as much as possible, and pump lead into her incessantly until she's dead. When she's down, exterminate all the larvae by holding down the fire button and jumping or flying away from their charging attacks.

UZI TRYING TO KID? Keep these babies equipped from now on.

MISSION 11

The first door with the eye on leads to Secret Room #14. Use the Quick Heart to outrun the ball down the slope, and once you've broken the door under the spike trap, double jump into the secret hatch beneath the slope to get the Merciless. Once in the big room with the disappearing platforms, go through the door on the left wall to find Secret Room #15 and then head through the passage at the top to get the Submachine Guns.

BOSS 7

Bolverk

This lad isn't that fast, but his moves have tremendous range. Ignore the dogs that are with him, get up close and slash away at him using Devil Mode whenever you can. He'll get in a big hit here and there, which will hurt you, but it'll also refill your Devil Gauge very quickly.

BONE RANGER: What he lacks in muscles he makes up for in sinisterness.

CHUPPA PUPS: Don't bother unduly with the mutts - conentrate on the big guy...

ELECTRIC BEAMS: Ignore the skulls and take out the electrical boxes.

MISSION 12/ BOSS 8

Plutonian

Search the door behind you for Secret Room #16 before battling the boss. You have to smash the diamonds (not the skulls), but there's no good way to target them. Just double jump and press ⓐ. Break the urns down the following passage and examine the wall behind the last urn on the left for Secret Room #17. You'll then fight Plutonian, but this guy is lame. Simply stand well back and pick him off slowly with your Rocket Launcher. He'll never reach you and you'll defeat him with ease.

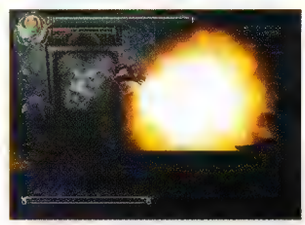
ARIUS DANESH: Give me a siggghhnnn. Hit me baby one more...

MISSION 13/ BOSS 9

Arius 1

As with many of the game's bosses, Arius' attacks are mostly short-range. Get in, slash him some, then jump out before he has time to react. Your biggest challenge here is keeping him targeted while he teleports.

COLLAR BLIND: Give that mincing, goateed berk a good going over for us.



BANG TIME: Don't bother getting in close, use your Rocket Launcher from a safe distance.

MISSION 14

Great. A scavenger hunt for power points. First, run back toward the camera and enter the second door on the left for Secret Room #18. Then, go forward through the archway and stay close to the left side of the screen in order to find the Missile Launcher. You'll start off on the lower right of the map, just below the area where it juts off to the right. The first power point is just around the corner in the lower right of the map. Go through the archway near the power-up station, fight off the abyss goats, and then fly up to the rooftop to find it. The second power point is well hidden. If you take a look at the map, you'll see a closed-off room in the upper left corner. To get to it, make your way to the place where the wall is low enough to jump over. Enter the chamber which contains the Healing Heart and the Merciless Sword, and you'll find it.

The third power point is in the far upper right corner of the map, which is guarded by Savage Golems and Demonochoruses. There's also a Gold Orb that's hidden on a shelf here. The final power point is down that alleyway that juts off to the right of your spawn point. It's up in the air a bit and, be warned, it's guarded by a whole army of evil Brontomancers and Pyromancers. You'll go through the red doors here once you've got all four points activated.

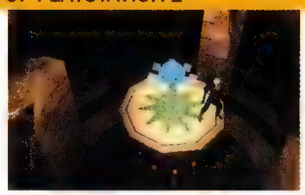
ORB-GASMIC: Hit the four orb triggers as you go through the stage.

BOSS 10

Phantom

While it's tempting to perch on his body he'll drill you with his tail if uncoiled. Memorise his attacks and keep moving and firing. The pillars of flame come in groups of four, and the fire breath is usually a single shot. Always leap away from his jumping attacks, and switch to Devil Mode if you're close enough.

EYE TIME: Slash this socket and then beat the baddies in record time.



SPIN MAN: Hit this Trigger Orb to make platforms appear above you...

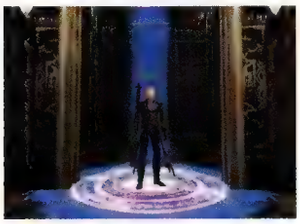
MISSION 15

Your goal here is to crack the seal. If you hit the eye in the centre you'll get a three-minute barrage of enemies. Keep pounding away at them, and every time the hole closes, re-open it with a shot to the central eye.

MISSION 16/BOSS 11

Trismagia

When you get to the room that holds the Sacrilege, the tapestry below it opens Secret Room #19. After Bolverk you'll meet Trismagia – Only one of its heads can be damaged at a time, so lock on to the one that's taking damage. When that's defeated, hop onto the table and examine the chair for Secret Room #20.



LIGHT FIT: Search the tapestry in the room ahead for another secret room.

MISSION 17/ BOSS 12

Arius 2

Again, the problem here will be keeping him in your sights. The ladies will constantly stab you in the back, so kill them when you can but pursue him relentlessly. As before, he's quite vulnerable to the Devil Mode so use it frequently.

'TACHE GORDON: It's time to see off Arius once and for all.

MISSION 18/ BOSS 13

Final Boss

Dante goes through the warp (a sort of Star Trek-inspired black hole-looking thing) and faces his final boss, which is a giant, immobile lump of flesh with vital pieces from most of the game's other bosses sticking out of its mass. Not the most pleasant creature by any means. Defeat it by alternately staying way back and blasting away, or getting up close and off to one side and unloading bullets into its meaty girth. In its second form, however, the boss is often invulnerable. The trick to this one is to cartwheel around him – this is by far the best tactic for the rain of fire attack – until he stops moving and is a decent enough distance from you, and then open up with your guns. Then, as soon as your Devil Trigger is activated, nip in for some effective whackage. Shouldn't take too long to finish him off. Proper job.

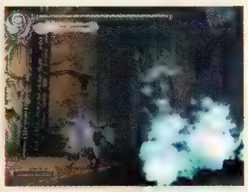
DEMON STAINS: Keep moving to evade this demon and get in with your DT.

THE QUICK AND THE HEAD: Concentrate on each head in turn...

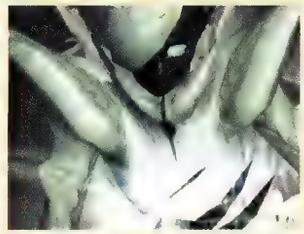
LUCIA MISSION GUIDE

MISSION 1

Collect 45 Red Orbs and go through the door, then jump down into the waterway and search the grating for Secret Room #1. Then as you head up through the castle (where Dante starts his scenario), search the head carving on the wall next to the exit to find Secret Room #2.



SMOKE IS IT: Kill the winged beast to stop the smoke pillars.



DEVIL TOASTER: Lucia's Devil Trigger form is brighter but no less sinister than Dante's.

MISSION 2

You'll get the Aerial Heart immediately. Just watch out for the goat's projectile attacks. Then travel up through the platforms and you'll arrive at one that constantly spawns Agonofinis. In between batches, jump to the platform immediately up and to the right, and smash the statue there to find the darts.

BOSS 1

Tartarossa

When you run into this nasty two-headed guy, don't be spooked. He's slow, and telegraphs his moves, so if you're nimble you can outwit him fairly quickly. Just jump into the air any time he rears back, and unload whatever you've got into him. Next, shoot at his heads until you find the one that actually takes damage, and then lock on to that one and hurl knives into it. If you lose the lock, the vulnerable head may switch from one to the other, so search it out again. The technique to finishing him off is exactly the same as with Jokatgulm and Trismagia.

MISSION 3

When you get to the end of the street, you'll see three large doors on the left. Go through the middle door and search the room to find the Klyamoor – a pair of swords with a wider range than the Cutlaseer. Now head back into the alleyway and through the leftmost door that has angels carved on it. When you reach the dead end, cut your way through the debris and continue. When you reach the water, you'll see a building off to your right – but ignore it for now. Enter the other building and search the carving beneath the stairs for SR#3, then get the Healing Heart from the room above. Now head through the arch, go up the steps for SR#4 and then exit through the large door.

RAM FISTED: Get in close and use combo attacks to kill these Blood Goats.

BOSS 2

Jokatgulm

Stay as far away from Jokatgulm as possible, where her tentacles are easier to dodge, and chuck darts into one of the tentacles until it disappears. Then, move up close, lock on to her neck and unload a combo or two to finish her off, retreating quick sharp before she spits her poison breath at you or lashes out with one of her tentacles. Don't take unnecessary risks with this one and you should be fine.

MISSION 4/ BOSS 3

Cerastgulm

He's very durable, this one, but also quite slow and predictable. He'll hurt you if he can get his hands on you, mind, so make sure that you jump or dodge every time you see him rear back. If he manages to grab you, a quick switch into Devil trigger should make him let go of you. After this, you'll run across a demon tank. Just keep an eye out for its tough-to-see mounted machine gun, and it should be laughably easy to dispatch.

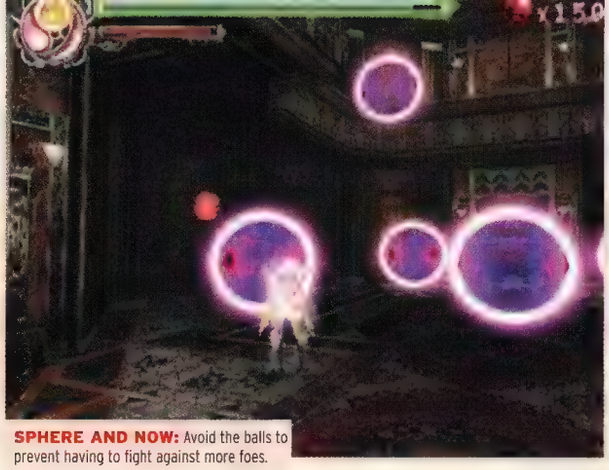
MAIN STATION: Use the pillars to shield yourself and use proctiles to wear it down...

MISSION 5

Once you get the power turned on (by going through the hangar), head back up through the metal garage door. You'll get nailed by the Evil Heart, which'll drain your life force. Fight your way along the catwalks until you get to the yellow door – enter it to reveal a circular room. Pound on the sphere to unlock it.

Run back down the stairs. At the bottom is a Devil mode recharge station – heal and recharge. Fly to the pedestal at the top for the Flame Heart. Jump back down the tube, and head through the blue door. Jump on to the pedestal in the pool and enter the door. Go to the carving, and you'll trade in the Evil Heart. Go through the door and step on the elevator. At the top, the door on the right leads to SR#5. The dented door is the way out.

PAPA'S GOT A BRAND NEW HAG: Believe it or not, she's one of the good guys.



SPHERE AND NOW: Avoid the balls to prevent having to fight against more foes.

MISSION 6/BOSS 4

Noctpteran and Larvae

When you start, fly over to the NW platform for SR# 6 The boss battle isn't too tough as long as you realise that the big moth will do nothing and the grubs are aggressive. Stick with the throwing daggers for this one as you'll need the extra mobility. If you find yourself swallowed, button mash to find your way out. Now you're going to get wet. Swim toward the glowing, blue cave that the camera hints at and grab the Bowgun. Equip it to fight any adversaries underwater.

DAVE LEE MOTH: Remember, kill the moth first before concentrating on the larvae.

MISSION 7

A short way in, you'll see a tunnel that goes straight up. Take it for the Aqua Heart. There's also Secret Room #7 on one of the ledges above the pedestal on which the Heart rests. Head down the hallway on the right and jump into the hole. The current will be strong at this point, so just continue going up until you reach a circular room with globes. Strike all the globes and then hop up on to the pedestals that are revealed. That'll ease the current in the other room. Get the Orb, and enter the cavern to find a skills shrine.

BOSS 5

Tateobesu

This is one of the easiest boss fights in the game, provided you have the Bowgun. This boss can't be targeted when he's invisible, but as soon as he flickers into view, lock on to him and lay on the fire button, dodging his charge at the last moment.

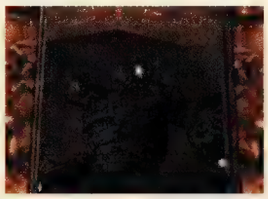
EQUIP
THROWING DAGGERS
Silver knives created to stand up to demons.
DARTS
Short swords to be thrown at enemies.
CRANKY BOMB
Compact bombs that can be set or thrown.

BOW DEREK: A funky enough weapon, but it can only be used underwater. Arse.

BOSS 6

Plutonian

This battle would be more fair if the room were smaller. The Plutonian can't even reach you from its starting position. You could just whittle away at it from afar, but it's faster if you switch to Devil Trigger form and get in close.

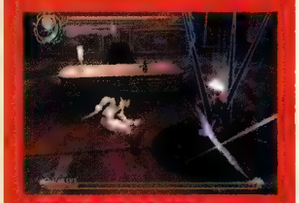


SILENT KNIGHT: Pick him off gradually from a safe distance...

MISSION 9/ BOSS 7

Arius

This battle becomes harder the longer you let it go on, so be as quick as you can. Arius will keep summoning underlings to have a go at you, but don't bother dispatching them. Just hack away at the big man himself, being careful to leap or dodge out of the way of his black icicle blasts and black hole-like gravity wells.

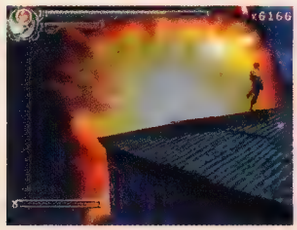


LUCIA'S FOR FEARS: Target Arius (not his minions) and use your DT.

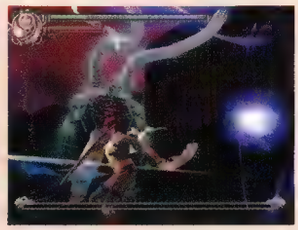
MISSION 8

As soon as you ascend into the room, check out the caves – the one on the right is Secret Room #8. There's also a Gold Orb stashed beneath the door on the left – swim over behind the fallen wall, and you should find it. Now head to the carving that says 'reflect my power'. Hit the fireballs it chucks out back at it with your swords, then smash Orbs to get the Quick Heart.

ORB GAMES: Hit these multiple times for extra orbs.



ROOF OF ALL EVIL: Keep to the rooftops and search for the four trigger orbs...



FEELING AID: Possessed Arius is equally as weak as his normal form. Get DT on his ass.

MISSION 10

You need to activate four power sources. The first is right outside the level's exit (search the door across the street for Secret Room #9). From your spawn point, run back toward the camera, taking the first left down the narrow alleyway. When it ends, look on the ledge up and to the right and you'll see a blue globe just begging to be beaten. This will also help you orientate yourself on the map – this location is on the map's lower right.

To find the second trigger, head back up near your spawn point and through the archway beside the power-up station. Once you get round the corner, you'll see the globe. You can also obtain the Quick Heart here. This is the map's extreme southern tip. The third trigger is in the murky green patch near the map's upper left corner. There's also a Golden Orb on one of the ledges in this area – nab it. Now jump over the low corner of the wall nearby to kill some of those baddies and earn yourself another of those Blue Orbs.

Head over to the map's upper right corner and smash the gargoyle statue to find the Cranky Bomb. Grab the Zambak Swords that are on the green wall, and shred the final power point, which is tucked away in a little alleyway near the narrowest part of the path.

Once you've activated all four power points, head back down the dead-end street in the map's lower right corner and through the red door that's there. Hit the big eye in the centre of the room to trigger a boss battle.

BOSS 8

Phantom

When he doesn't have his tail uncoiled, it's easy to stand on his back and shoot at his head. However, if he does break out the tail, get away fast. This then becomes a long-range or strike-and-retreat battle. But it's not tough. Just watch out for the pillars of fire, which are followed by him shooting a blast of flame into the air or stabbing at the air with his tail.

NIGHT SPIDER: The spider from *DMC* is back, but he's easier to kill

MISSION 11

Now it's time to break the seal. You can't strike it directly. Instead, smack the eyeball in the pink thing's centre some more, triggering a series of three-minute survival rounds. Eventually, it'll crack open.

MISSION 12

When you get off the elevator, you'll notice the hallway on your left with a vase on a pedestal at its end. Smash the vase for Secret Room # 10.

MISSION 13/ BOSS 9

Possessed Arius

Hmmm. Looks like this Arius fella's not finished with just yet... When this fight starts, he'll focus on launching very slow lightning globes at you which are easy to dodge. Occasionally, though, he'll try to grab you with his ribs, thump you with a hunk of pavement, or send a ray blasting from his chest (watch out for him levitating in preparation), so watch out for all of these attacks. It's still easy to pound him, however, either from afar with knives or up close. But it's not the last you'll see of him...

WALLACE & VOMIT: Dodge its spew to avoid getting poisoned...

BOSS 10

Arius Argonax

After he transforms, things get kinda different. He'll spurt blue goo, swat at you with his new tail and lunge at you with his teeth. However, simply standing as far away as you can and off to one side will avoid 90% of these attacks. Fill him with knives for the final cutscene. Ta-da.

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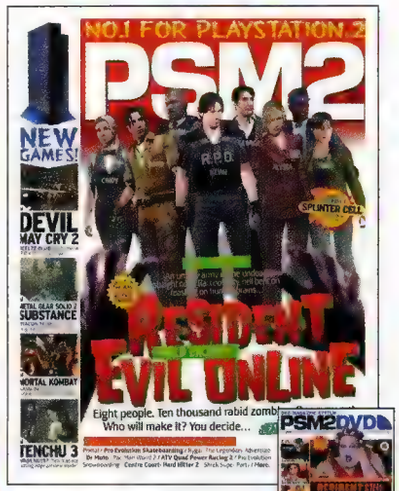

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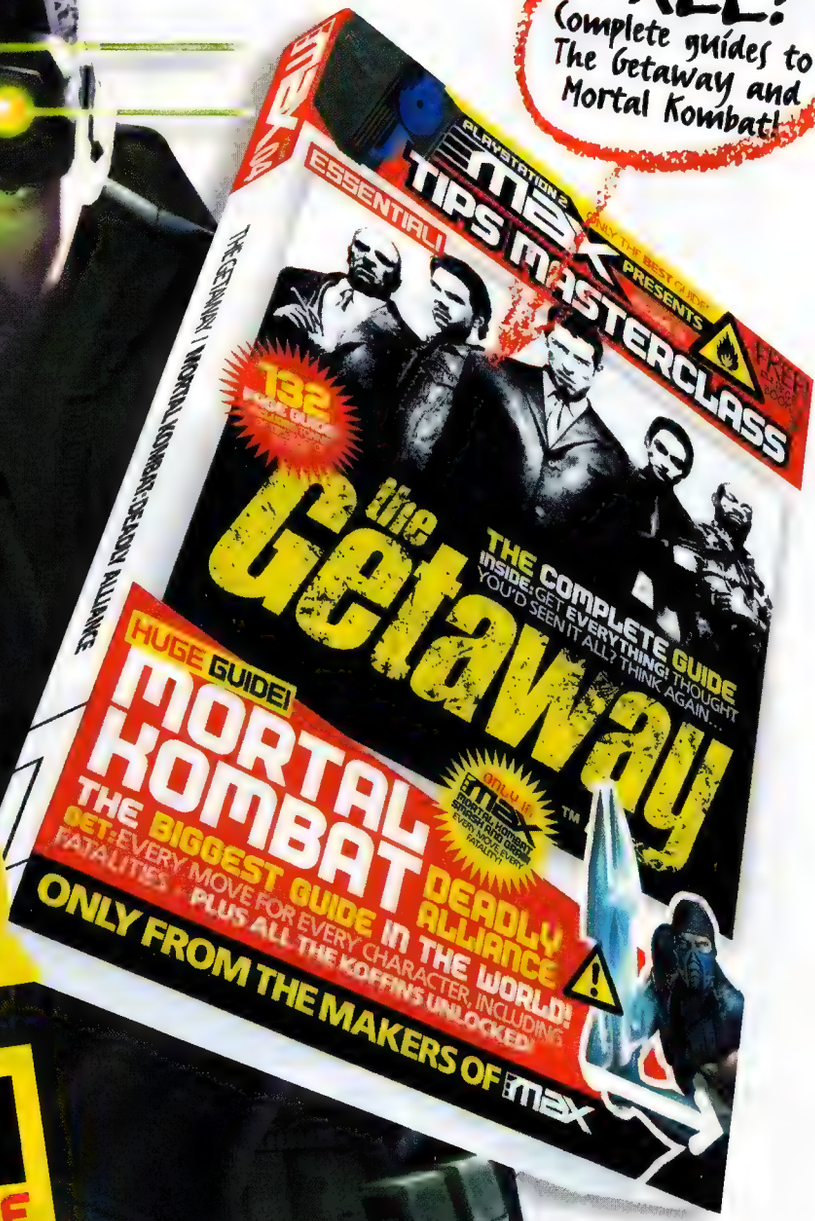
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FRAN... OF FUTURE PS2

プレビュー

USA TO SLAY: The 30 missions of the game take our hero from his genesis in the Arizona desert to a break-in at Alcatraz.

ARMY-GEDDON: There's a brilliant opening sequence that sees the Hulk going up against the might of the US army.

EXPECTED UK MAY

THE HULK

Angry? Me? Not since starting transcendental medita... *Crunch!* [swift kick to duberries] Why you hurt Hulk? Now Hulk have to SMAAASH!

As far as superheroes and anger management go, there's no-one that can top Marvel's not-so-jolly green giant. Sure, Batman knows how to bear a grudge, and Wolverine's snappier than a rattled Jack Russell, but for sheer, full blown, foam-at-the-mouth hissy fits, the Hulk's numero uno.

"FOR SHEER, FULL BLOWN FOAM-AT-THE-MOUTH HISSY FITS, THE HULK'S NUMERO UNO"

The Idea: Although the game is tied in with Ang Lee's cinematic release – out in the UK in July – the game forges its own path plotwise while still keeping close tabs on the Marvel genesis of the creature. As a result, in the game we're not looking at Dr David Banner experimenting on himself as per the TV series. Rather, it's Dr David Banner caught in a freak explosion and mutating for the first time in the middle of an Arizona test site.

Best Features: What we've seen of the game in action has been extremely encouraging so far.

Visually, everything's been enhanced on the cel shaded front, giving the project that vital injection of comic-bookishness. And the decision to divide gameplay into stealth sections for Banner, and full-on wall crumping for his Hulk alter ego is a smart one. Apparently, this will employ some kind of "don't make me angry" meter that'll only see the big mean green 'un appear once suitably aroused, if you get our meaning. The question this immediately begs to us is, what penalties will be put in place to deter the player from staying as the Hulk throughout the game? Regrettably, nothing's forthcoming from Vivendi on this front as yet...

We've also seen a fair amount of deformable scenery, ensuring that every Sonic Clap or Gamma Slam that the Hulk performs is accompanied by a gratifying display of splintering concrete and flying debris. Not only that, but vehicles like tanks and jeeps can be picked up and used as formidable weapons too.

Bottom Line: Ang Lee's film reputation is still on a high after the release of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, and with such a respected director behind it, the Hulk film should do the purple trousered one justice. All we need now is assurance that developers Radical are aiming just as high for the game.

ANTICIPATION ★★★★

HATE BALL POOL: Predictably, a lot of Hulk's old foe turn up for boss battles. Half-Life (pictured) as well as Flux and Rampage are in there.

STROP GEAR: Check out the gauge in the top left corner. Seems the effects of the transformation might only be temporary...

EXPECTED UK JUNE

VIOLENT RUNNING: Escaping the camp is only half the story.

THE GREAT ESCAPE

Whistle while you work, whistle while you dig... hell, you might as well whistle while you're ripping the arse out of your trousers on Nazi barbed wire. Yes, it's a stiff upper lip explosion of new screens and details about SCi's version of that old classic *Breakout*.

The Idea: Utilise the skills of four central characters from the film and get yourself out of Stalag Luft III. So, that's Hiltz (Steve McQueen) for the main part, McDonald (Gordon Jackson) who's able to sprecken da Cherman, Hendley (James Garner) who can steal or scrounge anything, and Sedgewick (James Coburn) who's able to repair any motorised vehicle.

Best Features: The character swapping aspect easily gives this the advantage over Codemasters' clever but sedentary *Prisoner of War* as does the fact that you actually get to use guns at some point in the proceedings. Your characters also have the ability to commandeer vehicles. Which means that Jeeps, trucks and – most importantly – motorbikes are all up for grabs outside the camp. (Jump that frikken' fence Steve, JUUUUUUMP!)

Beyond these elements though, everything else follows much the same path of the earlier POW-em-up. Peek through keyholes, hide in shadows, cause distractions and generally work your way up to the day of the escape itself.

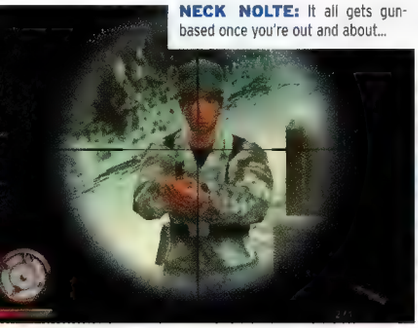
Bottom Line: As long as the game balances the creepy bits with some high speed chases and the odd shoot-out, there should be no reason why we won't be trying to whistle and smile at the same time when this turns up for preview.

ANTICIPATION ★★★

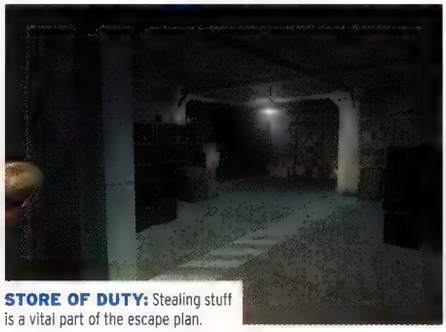
"JEEPS, TRUCKS AND – MOST IMPORTANTLY – MOTORBIKES ARE ALL UP FOR GRABS"

NAZI BOY: Sometimes stealth just isn't an option inside the camp.

HANDZ UP: Get caught up to no good and you'll be sent to the slammer.

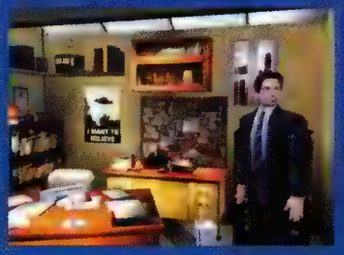


NECK NOLTE: It all gets gun-based once you're out and about...



STORE OF DUTY: Stealing stuff is a vital part of the escape plan.

ROWNTREE'S CHOO HITS: As with *Medal of Honor* you even to get to fight your way along a train at one point.



EXPECTED UK SUMMER

THE X-FILES: RESIST OR SERVE

The Idea: Remember the shocking adventure on PSone? You don't? Good. At least that'll give Sierra a running start on this, despite the fact that the TV show's defunct.

Best Features: This version's been fleshed out in 3D, which gives the plotline a much needed dose of Chris Carter's trademark atmospherics. Dark locations, waggly torch beams and a global run that takes the duo from Red Falls in the USA to deep inside a UFO. Both Duchovny and Anderson will provide voiceovers, while other characters like Skinner and Cancer Man all add to the sense of familiarity.

Bottom Line: The shots place this in the cabinet labelled '*Silent Hill* school of survival horror'. Which is exactly where it needs to be to succeed.

ANTICIPATION ★★★

EXPECTED UK TBC

STAR TREK: SHATTERED UNIVERSE

The Idea: You can't keep the Trek down – the fans will always come back for more. Which is probably why this game, originally canned back in 2001, has popped up once again on our radar.

Best Features: Captain Sulu is commanding the USS Excelsior as it fights its way out of a hostile universe. Which is where you come in. Piloting a shuttle, you have to work your way through missions against Klingons, Romulans, Vulcans, Tholians (who?) and the Gorn (WHO?). And there'll be attacks against a boss vessel called The Doomsday Machine. There'll also be 16 head-to-head challenges plus a Workshop mode that allows you to upgrade your vessel.

Bottom Line: There's still a few of us who have fond memories for *Star Trek Invasion*, of which this appears to be a noteworthy update. Well done TDK.

ANTICIPATION ★★★

OVERLOAD

A FRANTIC BURST OF FUTURE PS2

HIVE STAR: The Zerg come in a variety of forms, from dog-like scout units to gargantuan bug-tanks like this.

RAIN OF FIRE: You're only one trooper, but the orbital back-up means you can handle yourself even when outnumbered.

GRIM PEEKS: Here's Nova utilising her IR Sight to target enemy units even when they're hidden behind solid objects.

MAN BEATER: In this conflict there are times when you even have to battle Terran troops.

EXPECTED UK TBC 2009

STARCRAFT: GHOST

Getting excited, getting ex-ci-ted! Perhaps it's her hair? Perhaps it's that body armour? Then again, perhaps it's the fact that Nova can turn herself invisible before leaping on enemies and stabbing them through the skull like Steven Segal in Under Siege.

The Idea: You're a covert operative called Nova, sent behind enemy lines in the Starcraft universe – which means lots of insect-like Zergs to butcher with shiny hi-tech weapons.

Best Features: The transparency stealth move starts off being clever and then quickly becomes brilliant as soon as you realise that it's speed sensitive. Run faster, create greater noise and your body becomes more obvious to guards. Then there's the fact that you can call down both support vehicles and ordnance from orbit. Laser paint a target on the surface then radio in tanks or a nuke to clear the path ahead. Also, Nova's dead agile, putting Snake to shame, plus her moves aren't just confined to footwork. She can steal vehicles like Hover Bikes and scream around the sizable battlefields deciding what, or what not, to get involved with.

See, the real beauty of this game is that there's a war raging around Nova and it's up to you just how much you want to get involved. If, say, you stumble upon a Terran unit and help them out there's a chance you'll be rewarded with new abilities. And new skills mean greater tactical options when it comes to facing the enemy.

Bottom Line: *MGS2* meets *Aeon Flux* from the makers of *Starcraft*. A winner on all counts.

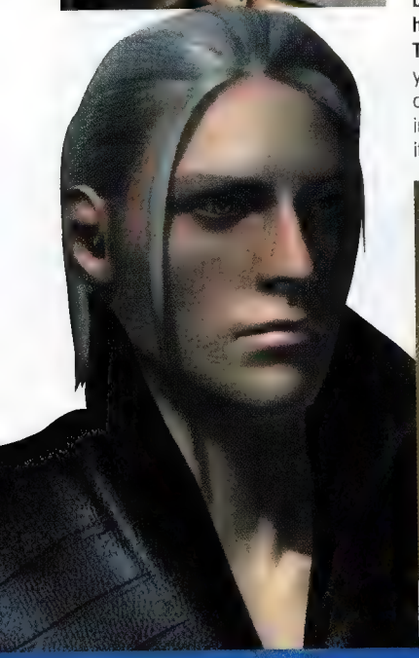
ANTICIPATION ★★★★★

"RUN FASTER AND YOUR BODY BECOMES MORE OBVIOUS TO GUARDS"

HERBY HAND COCK: Pressing A and B on your lightgun bring up map and inventory screens.

EXPECTED UK TBC

RESIDENT EVIL: DEAD AIM



***Dead Aim* is already shaping up to be the best lightgun take on *Resi* to date. Which – to quote Bananarama – is really saying something, especially when you look at the utter shod we've had to put up with thus far. True, *Dino Stalker* began to point in the right direction but, overall, the *Gun Survivor* series has failed to wow us.**

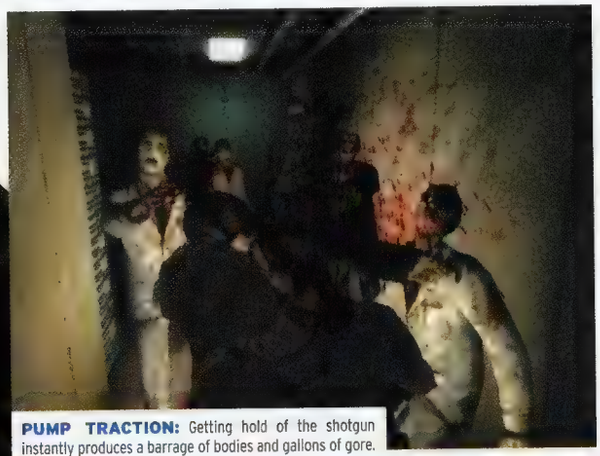
The Idea: No STARS to be seen, just you as Bruce MacGavin – an operative of some anti-Umbrella organisation investigating a gigantic sea cruiser as it crosses the Atlantic.

Best Features: Easily, the controls. This is the first *Gun Survivor* that doesn't leave you all fingers and stumps as soon as the undead come shambling after you. What makes it revolutionary is the shift from third to first-person as you explore. Pull the trigger wherever you are on the screen, and you'll immediately move into a shooting stance. Dispatch the flesh eaters, press the D-pad on the back of the G-Con and you'll slip back into the 'bloke-on-screen' mode.

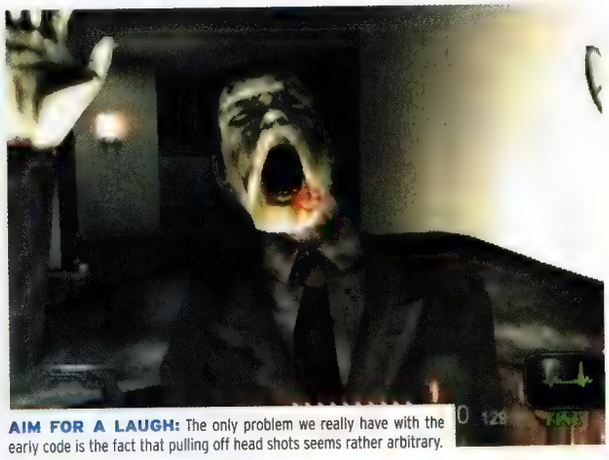
The rest of it is all reasonably predictable. Five different types of weapon; the handgun, shotgun, assault rifle, grenade launcher and particle rifle. Four nicely sizable environments to explore – upper and lower decks, cargo area and underwater test centre – plus the usual horde of coffin dodgers.

Bottom Line: This game 'feels' like the first real 3D version of the *Resi* experience. From solving basic puzzles and running out of ammo at crucial moments, to spending hours exploring the corners of the vast ship, it's lightgun survival horror at its finest.

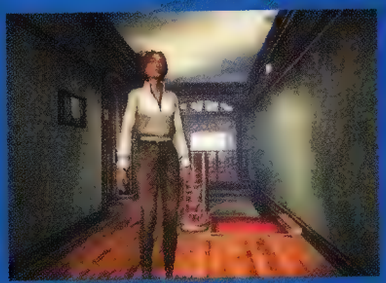
ANTICIPATION ★★★



PUMP TRACTION: Getting hold of the shotgun instantly produces a barrage of bodies and gallons of gore.



AIM FOR A LAUGH: The only problem we really have with the early code is the fact that pulling off head shots seems rather arbitrary.



EXPECTED UK APRIL

SYBERIA

The Idea: Kate Walker (Kate Walker Walker Walker by name) plod, plod, plods to a business lawyer sent to a town where they build automatons to finalise a buyout of the Voralberg Toy Factory. Prepare for some walkin'.

Best Features: Where to start? It's a cross between a point-and-click experience and your standard third-person action adventure. The cutscenes are lush and the puzzles suitably taxing in a Myst kind of way. Problem is Kate can't run. Which makes everything crawl along like a destitute slug. The control system is poor and a lot of the puzzle solutions are rooted around reading stupidly small text on an overly bright screen.

Bottom Line: It's early days yet but, seeing as this is a direct port from PC, the chances of anything changing are slim. Hmmm.

ANTICIPATION ★

EXPECTED UK MAY

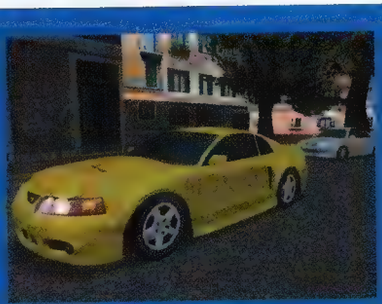
URBAN FREESTYLE SOCCER

The Idea: It's footie, but in a dirty, back-to-da-streets kind of way, and we're not talking about two medieval towns battling each other in a muddy field.

Best Features: Look beyond the Casual meet Yardie fashion fusion, and you'll find a four-on-four, sixth-the game minus the tedious offside boundaries and offside rules. There are 16 gangs and plenty of specials like scissor kicks, back heels and ball juggling to add tricks. Also, the addition of five game modes should add some breadth to the smaller pitches.

Bottom Line: At best, this'll be like a playable version of the Nike ad inside the ship. At worst a sub Sega Soccer Slam with bad dress sense.

ANTICIPATION ★★



EXPECTED UK MARCH

DOWNTOWN RUN

The Idea: Racing, my style, but rather than sitting in a traffic jam fingering your nostrils you get to race round Paris, London and Montreal.

Best Futures: All in the numbers this one. Twenty-six circuits, 34 licensed cars and night game modes – of which the ability to bet on individual races is an added bonus. The number that's really caught our eye though, is 12. Twelve power-ups that you can screw fellow competitors with as you bet around the tracks. Crunch this against a system that ought to push its engines to the limit and we could well be looking at a racer to rival *Midnight Club*.

Bottom Line: For all the Audi TTs and fast Mustangs in there, we're uncertain whether this'll drive us wild.

ANTICIPATION ★★

EXPECTED UK TBC

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS HEROES

The Idea: Never heard of D&D? Don't worry, just look at any fantasy title and you'll see the first of its RPGs peeking between the noughts and ones.

Best Features: It's the usual jobbelist of mystic stones, disappearing mates and the like with four character types – Wizard, Warrior, Elves and Rogue – and seven worlds. No news on whether there'll be any puzzles, but the monster system sounds intriguing. You can slow the action to motion and quickly intersperse your attacks in any way you fancy.

Bottom Line: Repetitive hacking was the ultimate downfall of the gorgeous looking Baldur's Gate, so we're hoping for a greater variance to play here.

ANTICIPATION ★★

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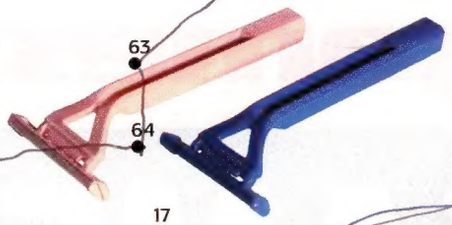

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BIG: SSX Tricky
Black and Bruised
Blade 2
Blood Omen 2
BloodRayne
Bloody Roar 3
BMX XXX
Bombad Racing
Bond 007: Nightfire
Bond: Agent Under Fire
Bouncer
Bounty Hunter: Star Wars
Britney's Dance Beat
Burnout
Burnout 2 Point of Impact

C = 0 3

C.Bandicoot: W.of Cortex
C-12 Final Resistance
CAPCOM vs SNK 2
Cart Fury
Casper: Spirit Dimensions
Chamber of Secrets
Checkmate
Chris Edwards' Ag. Inline
Circus Maximus
Citizen Kabuto (Giants)
City Crisis
Clock Tower 3
Code Veronica X
Colin McRae Rally 3
Commandos 2
Conflict Zone
Conflict: Desert Storm
Contra: Shattered Soldier
Cool Boarder 2001
Crazy Bump's: Car Bat.
Crazy Taxi
Cricket 2002
Cyprien's Chronicles

D = 0 4

Dare Devil
Dark Alliance
Dark Angel
Dark Cloud
Dark Legacy
Dark Summit
Dave Mirra BMX 2
David Beckham Soccer
DDRMAX: (D. D. Rev. 6)
Dead or Alive 2
Dead to Rights
Delta Force: U. Warfare
Desert Storm (Conflict)
Deus-Ex
Devil May Cry
Devil May Cry 2
Digimon World
Dino Stalker
Disney's Dinosaur
Disney's Kingdom Hearts
Distant Thunder
DNA Dark Native Apostle
Donald Duck: Quack Att.
Downforce
Dr. Muto
Dracula Last Sanctuary
Dragonball Z: Budokai
Draken: Ancient Gates
Driven
Driver 2
Driving Emotion Type-S
Dropship
Drum Mania
Dynasty Warriors 2
Dynasty Warriors 3

E = 0 5

Ecco the Dolphin
Eden, Project
Eggo Mania
Eighteen Wheeler
Elemental Force
Elite Force: Voyager
Emotion Type-S (Driving)
End Game
Ephemeral Phantasia
Episode 1: Star Fighter
Escape Monkey Island
ESPN Int. Track & Field
ESPN Int.Winter Sports'02
ESPN NBA Tonight
ESPN NBA Tonight 2002
ESPN NFL Primetime 02
ESPN Skateboarding
ESPN Snowboarding
Eternal Ring
Eve of Extinction
Evergrace
Evil Twin
Evolution Snocross
Extermination
Extreme G 3
Extreme Racer

F = 0 6

F1 2001
F1 2002
F1 Champ. Season 2000
Fanta-Vision
Fatal Frame
Fellowship Of The Ring
FIFA 2001
FIFA 2002
FIFA 2003
Fifa World Cup 2002
Final Fantasy 10
Final Fantasy 8
Fire Blade
Forever Kingdom
Formula 1 2001
Four by Four Evolution
Freekstyle
Freestyle BMX 2
Frequency
Frontline (M. of Honor)
Fur Fighters

G = 0 7

G1 Jockey
Gauntlet: Dark Legacy
Getaway
Ghost Recon
Giants: Citizen Kabuto
Gitaroo Man
Godai: Elemental Force
Golf, Swing Away
Gradius 3 & 4
Gran Turismo 2
Gran Turismo 3
Gran Turismo Concept
Grand T Auto: Vice City
Grand Theft Auto 3
Grandia 2
Grandia Xtreme
Gravity Games
Green Rogue
GTA 3
GTA: Vice City
Guilty Gear X
Guilty Gear X Plus
Gun Griffon Blaze
Gundam: J to Jaburo
Gungrave

H = 0 8

H30 Surfing
Half Life
Harry Potter
Harry Potter Ch Secrets
Harvest Moon: Homeland
Haven: Call of the King
Headhunter
Herdy Gerdy
Heroes of Might & Magic
Hidden Invasion
High Heat Baseball 2002
High Heat Baseball 2003
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Hot Shots Golf 3
HSX: Hypersonic Xtreme

I = 0 9

Ico
In Cold Blood
Int. Super Soccer
Int. Superstar Soccer 2
Int. Track & Field
Int. Winter Sports 2002
ISS Pro Evolution

J = 1 0

J McGrath's S'cross World
J. Moseley's Mad Trix
J.Bond: Agent Under Fire
Jade Cocoon 2
Jak & Daxter
James Bond: Nightfire
Jedi Star Fighter
Jekyll & Hyde
Jikkyou World Soccer '00
Jikkyou World Soccer '01
Jojo's Bizarre Adventure 2
Just Bring It

K = 1 1

Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer
Kengo: M. of Bushido
Kessen
Kessen 2
Kinetica
King of Fighters 2000
Kingdom Hearts
King's Field: Ancient City
Klonoa 2
Knockout Kings 2001
Knockout Kings 2002

L = 1 2

L. of Kain: Blood Omen 2
L. of Kain: Soul Reaver 2
Largo Winch
Le Mans 24 Hours
Legaia: Duel Saga
Legend of Black Kat
Legends of Wrestling
Legends of Wrestling 2
Legion: Leg. of Excalibur
Lego Racers 2
LMA Manager 2002
LMA Manager 2003
Loony Tunes Space Race
Lord of Rings Two Towers
Lord of Rings: Fel. of Ring
Lotus Challenge

M = 1 3

Madden NFL 2001
Madden NFL 2002
Madden NFL 2003
Major Lgue Baseball '02
Major Lgue Baseball '03
Mark of Kri
Martian Gothic
Master of Bushido
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2
Max Payne
Maximo
McGrath's S'cross World
MDK2
Medal of Honor Frontline
Men In Black 2 Alien Esc.
Metal Gear Solid 2
Micro Machines
Midnight Club
Might & Magic
Mike Tyson Boxing
Millionaire
Minority Report
MLB Slugfest 2003
Mobile Suit Gun.: Z.Front
Mobile Suit Gun.F.v Zeon
Mobile Suit Gundam
Monkey Island (Escape)
Monsters Inc
Mort.Kombat: Deadly All.
Moto GP
Moto GP 2
Motor Mayhem
Mr Moskeeto
MTV Music Generator 2
MTV Skateboarding
Mummy Returns
MX 2002
MX Rider
MX Superfly

N = 1 4

Namco Museum
NBA 2K2
NBA 2K3
NBA Live 2001
NBA Live 2002
NBA Live 2003
NBA Starting Five
NBA Street
NBA Tonight. ESPN
Need for Speed H.Purs.2
NFL Q'back Club 2002
NHL 2002
NHL 2003
NHL Hitz 2002
Nightfire
No One Lives Forever

O = 1 5

Oni
Onimusha 2
Onimusha: Warlords
007 Agent Under Fire
007 Nightfire
Operation Winback
Operative (N.O.L.F.)
Orphen

P = 1 6

Parappa the Rapper 2
Parasite Eve 2
Paris-Dakar Rally
Penny Racers
Pirates: Leg. of Black Kat
Player Manager 2001
Player Manager 2002
Polaroid Pete
Police 24/7
Pool Master: Q-Ball
Portal Runner
Premier Manager 2003
Prisoner of War
Pro Evolution Soccer
Pro Evolution Soccer 2
Pro Rally 2002
Project Eden
Project Zero

Q = 1 7

Q-Ball: Billiards Master
Quack Attack
Quake 3 Revolution

R = 1 8

R Carmichael's MX 2002
Racer Revenge
Raging Breath
Ratchet and Clank
Rayman 2
Rayman M
RC Revenge Pro
Ready 2 Rumble 2
Real Robot Regiment
Red Card Soccer 2003
Red Faction
Red Faction 2
Reign Of Fire
Res. Evil Gun Survivor 2
Res.Evil: C Veronica X
Rez
Ridge Racer 5
Ring of Red
Rise of the Akkadian
Robot Wars
Rocket Power Bch.Bandits
Rocky
RTS: Army Men
Rumble Racing
Run Like Hell
Rune: Viking Warlord
Rygar: Legendary Adv.

S = 1 9

S Palmer's Snowboarder
Scooby Doo: 100 Frights
Scorpion King
Sega Soccer Slam
Seven Blades
Shadow Hearts
Shadow of Memories
Shadow Of Zorro
Shadowman 2
Shinobi
Shox
Silent Hill 2
Silent Scope
Silent Scope 2
Silent Scope 3
Silpheed: Lost Planet
Simpsons' Skateboarding
Simpsons: Road Rage
Sims
Sky Odyssey
Slam Tennis
Sled Storm
Sly Cooper & Thievius R.
Sly Racoon
Smackdown! 3: J. Bring It
Smackdown! 4: Shut Y.M.
Smash Court Tennis
Smugglers Run
Smugglers Run 2
SOCOM: US Navy Seals
Soldier of Fortune
Soul Reaver 2
Spiderman The Movie
Splashdown
Spy Hunter
Spyro: Ent.the Dragonfly
SSX - Snowboarding
SSX Tricky
Star Trek: Elite Force
Star Wars Jedi Starfighter
Star Wars: Bounty Hunter
Star Wars: Racer Revenge
Star Wars: Star Fighter
State of Emergency
Street Hoops
Stuntman
Suikoden 3
Summoner
Summoner 2
Sunny Garcia: Surfing
Super Bust A Move
Super Trucks
Supercar St. Challenge
Superman S of Apokolips
Surfing H30
Swing Away Golf

T = 2 0

T. Woods PGA Tour 2001
Tarzan Freeride
TD Overdrive
Tekken 4
Tekken Tag Tournament
Tennis 2K2
Terminator: Dawn of Fate
Test Drive: Wide Open
The Bouncer
The Fellowship Of Ring
The Getaway
The Legend of Black Kat
The Mark of Kri
The Mummy Returns
The Scorpion King
The Simpsons Skateboard
The Simpsons: Road Rage
The Sims
The Thing
The Two Towers
The Weakest Link
Theme Park World
This is Football 2002
This is Football 2003
Throwdown: UFC
Thunderhawk: Op.
Tiger Woods Golf 2002
Tiger Woods Golf 2003
Time Crisis 2
Time Splitters
Time Splitters 2
TOCA Race Driver
Tokyo Extreme Racer
Tom & Jerry: W.of Whisk.
Tom Clancy: Ghost Recon
Tomb Raider 4
Tony Hawk's 3
Tony Hawk's 4
Top Gun: Combat Zones
Total Immersion Racing
Track and Field
Transworld Surf
Triple Play 2002
Triple Play Baseball
Turok: Evolution
Twin Calibre
Twisted Metal Black
Ty the Tasmanian Tiger

U = 2 1

UEFA Champion League
Ult.F.Champ: Throwdown
Ultraman Fighting Evo. 2
Unreal Tournament

V = 2 2

Vampire Apocalypse
Vampire Night
Vice City, G.T.A.
Victorious Boxers
Virtua Tennis 2
Voyager Elite Force
V-Rally 3

W = 2 3

W Games Snowboarding
Wacky Races
War of the Monsters
Warriors of M & M
Way of the Samurai
Weakest Link
Wetrix 2
Who Wants 2BA Million.2
Wild Wild Racing
Wipeout Fusion
World Rally Champ.2 Ext.
Worms Blast
Wrath of Cortex
WRC: World Rally Champ
Wreckless: Yakuza Miss.
WWE Smackdown! J.B.I.
WWE Smackdown! SYM
WWF Smackdown! J.B.I.

X = 2 4

X-Men: Next Dimension
X-Squad
Xtreme G3

Y = 2 5

Yu-Gi-Oh! Duel Monst. 2

Z = 2 6

Zone of the Enders
Zorro (Shadow Of)

0-9 = 2 7

007 Agent Under Fire
007 Nightfire
102 Dalmations
18 Wheeler
2002 FIFA World Cup
4x4 Evolution
7 Blades

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